Stories by

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STORIES BY FOREIGN AUTHORS

GERMAN
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CHRISTIAN GELLERT'S LAST CHRISTMAS . . . . . By Berthold Auerbach

A GHETTO VIOLET . . . . . By Leopold Kompert

THE SEVERED HAND . . . . By Wilhelm Hauff

PETER SCHLEMIHL . . . . . By Adelbert von Chamisso

NEW YORK

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1898

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CHRISTIAN GELLERT'S LAST CHRISTMAS

BY

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

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CHRISTIAN GELLERT'S LAST CHRISTMAS

BY BERTHOLD AUERBACH

THREE o'clock had just struck from the tower of St. Nicholas, Leipzig, on the afternoon of December 22d, 1768, when a man, wrapped in a loose overcoat, came out of the door of the University. His countenance was exceedingly gentle, and on his features cheerfulness still lingered, for he had been gazing upon a hundred cheerful faces; after him thronged a troop of students, who, holding back, allowed him to precede them: the passengers in the streets saluted him, and some students, who pressed forwards and hurried past him homewards, saluted him quite reverentially. He returned their salutations with a surprised and almost deprecatory air, and yet he knew, and could not conceal from himself, that he was one of the best beloved, not only in the good city of Leipzig, but in all lands far and wide.

It was Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, the Poet of Fables, Hymns, and Lays, who was just leaving his college.

When we read his "Lectures upon Morals," which were not printed until after his death, we obtain but a very incomplete idea of the great power with which they came immediately from Gellert's mouth. Indeed, it was his voice, and the touching manner in which he delivered his lectures, that made so deep an impression upon his hearers; and Rabener was right when once he wrote to a friend, that "the philanthropic voice" of Gellert belonged to his words.

Above all, however, it was the amiable and pure personal character of Gellert which vividly and edifyingly impressed young hearts. Gellert was himself the best example of pure moral teaching; and the best which a teacher can give his pupils is faith in the victorious might, and the stability of the eternal moral laws. His lessons were for the Life, for his life in itself was a lesson. Many a victory over the troubles of life, over temptations of every kind, ay, many an elevation to nobility of thought, and to purity of action, had its origin in that lecture-hall, at the feet of Gellert.

It was as though Gellert felt that it was the last time he would deliver these lectures; that those words so often and so impressively uttered would be heard no more from his mouth; and there was a peculiar sadness, yet a peculiar strength, in all he said that day.

He had this day earnestly recommended

modesty and humility; and it appeared almost offensive to him, that people as he went should tempt him in regard to these very virtues; for continually he heard men whisper, "That is Gellert!"

What is fame, and what is honor? A cloak of many colors, without warmth, without protection: and now, as he walked along, his heart literally froze in his bosom, as he confessed to himself that he had as yet done nothing—nothing which could give him a feeling of real satisfaction. Men honored him and loved him: but what was all that worth? His innermost heart could not be satisfied with that; in his own estimation he deserved no meed of praise; and where, where was there any evidence of that higher and purer life which he would fain bring about! Then, again, the Spirit would comfort him and say: "Much seed is lost, much falls in stony places, and much on good ground and brings forth sevenfold."

His inmost soul heard not the consolation, for his body was weak and sore burdened from his youth up, and in his latter days yet more than ever; and there are conditions of the body in which the most elevating words, and the cheeriest notes of joy, strike dull and heavy on the soul. It is one of the bitterest experiences of life to discover how little one man can really be to another. How joyous is that youthful freshness which can

believe that, by a thought transferred to another's heart, we can induce him to become another being, to live according to what he must acknowledge true, to throw aside his previous delusions, and return to the right path !

The youngsters go their way ! Do your words follow after ? Whither are they going ? What are now their thoughts ? What manner of life will be theirs ? "My heart yearns after them, but cannot be with them : oh, how happy were those messengers of the Spirit, who cried aloud to youth or manhood the words of the Spirit, that they must leave their former ways, and thenceforth change to other beings ! Pardon me, O God ! that I would fain be like them ; I am weak and vile, and yet, methinks, there must be words as yet unheard, unknown—oh ! where are they, those words which at once lay hold upon the soul ? "

With such heavy thoughts went Gellert away from his college-gate to Rosenthal. There was but one small pathway cleared, but the passers cheerfully made way for him, and walked in the snow that they might leave him the pathway unimpeded ; but he felt sad, and "as if each tree had somewhat to cast at him." Like all men really pure, and cleaving to the good with all their might, Gellert was not only far from contenting himself with work already done : he also, in his anxiety to be doing, almost forgot that he

had ever done anything, and thus he was, in the best sense of the word, modest; he began with each fresh day his course of action afresh, as if he now for the first time had anything to accomplish. And yet he might have been happy, in the reflection how brightly beamed his teaching for ever, though his own life was often clouded. For as the sun which glows on summer days still lives as concentrated warmth in wine, and somewhere on some winter night warms up a human heart, so is the sunshine in that man's life whose vocation it is to impart to others the conceptions of his own mind. Nay, there is here far more; for the refreshing draught here offered is not diminished, though thousands drink thereof.

Twilight had set in when Gellert returned home to his dwelling, which had for its sign a "Schwarz Brett" or "black board." His old servant, Sauer by name, took off his overcoat; and his amanuensis, Gödike, asked whether the Professor had any commands; being answered in the negative, Gödike retired, and Sauer lighted the lamp upon the study-table. "Some letters have arrived," said he, as he pointed to several upon the table: Gellert inclined his head, and Sauer retired also. Outside, however, he stood awhile with Gödike, and both spoke sorrowfully of the fact that the Professor was evidently again suffering severely. "There is a melancholy," said Gödike, "and it is the most usual, in which

the inward depression easily changes to displeasure against every one, and the household of the melancholic suffers thereby intolerably; for the displeasure turns against them,—no one does anything properly, nothing is in its place. How very different is Gellert's melancholy! Not a soul suffers from it but himself, against himself alone his gloomy thoughts turn, and towards every other creature he is always kind, amiable, and obliging: he bites his lips; but when he speaks to any one, he is wholly good, forbearing, and self-forgetful."

Whilst they were talking together, Gellert was sitting in his room, and had lighted a pipe to dispel the agitation which he would experience in opening his letters; and while smoking, he could read them much more comfortably. He reproached himself for smoking, which was said to be injurious to his health, but he could not quite give up the "horrible practice," as he called it.

He first examined the addresses and seals of the letters which had arrived, then quietly opened and read them. A fitful smile passed over his features; there were letters from well-known friends, full of love and admiration, but from strangers also, who, in all kinds of heart-distress, took counsel of him. He read the letters full of friendly applause, first hastily, that he might have the right of reading them again, and that he might not know all at once; and when he had

read a friend's letter for the second time, he sprang from his seat and cried, "Thank God! thank God! that I am so fortunate as to have such friends!" To his inwardly diffident nature these helps were a real requirement; they served to cheer him, and only those who did not know him called his joy at the reception of praise—conceit; it was, on the contrary, the truest modesty. How often did he sit there, and all that he had taught and written, all that he had ever been to men in word and deed, faded, vanished, and died away, and he appeared to himself but a useless servant of the world. His friends he answered immediately; and as his inward melancholy vanished, and the philanthropy, nay, the sprightliness of his soul beamed forth, when he was among men and looked in a living face, so was it also with his letters. When he bethought him of the friends to whom he was writing, he not only acquired tranquillity, that virtue for which his whole life long he strove; but his loving nature received new life, and only by slight intimations did he betray the heaviness and dejection which weighed upon his soul. He was, in the full sense of the word, "philanthropic," in the sight of good men; and in thoughts for their welfare, there was for him a real happiness and a joyous animation.

When, however, he had done writing and felt lonely again, the gloomy spirits came back: he

had seated himself, wishing to raise his thoughts for composing a sacred song; but he was ill at ease, and had no power to express that inward, firm, and self-rejoicing might of faith which lived in him. Again and again the scoffers and free-thinkers rose up before his thoughts: he must refute their objections, and not until that was done did he become himself.

It is a hard position, when a creative spirit cannot forget the adversaries which on all sides oppose him in the world: they come unsummoned to the room and will not be expelled; they peer over the shoulder, and tug at the hand which fain would write; they turn images upside down, and distort the thoughts; and here and there, from ceiling and wall, they grin, and scoff, and oppose: and what was just gushing as an aspiration from the soul, is converted to a confused absurdity.

At such a time, the spirit, courageous and self-dependent, must take refuge in itself and show a firm front to a world of foes.

A strong nature boldly hurls his inkstand at the Devil's head; goes to battle with his opponents with words both written and spoken; and keeps his own individuality free from the perplexities with which opponents disturb all that has been previously done, and make the soul unsteadfast and unnerved for what is to come.

Gellert's was no battling, defiant nature, which

relies upon itself; he did not hurl his opponents down and go his way; he would convince them, and so they were always ready to encounter him. And as the applause of his friends rejoiced him, so the opposition of his enemies could sink him in deep dejection. Besides, he had always been weakly; he had, as he himself complained, in addition to frequent coughs and a pain in his loins, a continual gnawing and pressure in the centre of his chest, which accompanied him from his first rising in the morning until he slept at night.

Thus he sat for a while, in deep dejection: and, as often before, his only wish was, that God would give him grace whereby when his hour was come, he might die piously and tranquilly.

It was past midnight when he sought his bed and extinguished his light.

And the buckets at the well go up and go down.

About the same hour, in Duben Forest, the rustic Christopher was rising from his bed. As with steel and flint he scattered sparks upon the tinder, in kindling himself a light, his wife, awaking, cried:

"Why that heavy sigh?"

"Ah! life is a burden: I 'm the most harassed mortal in the world. The pettiest office-clerk may now be abed in peace, and need n't break off

his sleep, while I must go out and brave wind and weather."

"Be content," replied his wife: "why, I dreamt you had actually been made magistrate, and wore something on your head like a king's crown."

"Oh! you women; as though what you see is n't enough, you like to chatter about what you dream."

"Light the lamp, too," said his wife, "and I 'll get up and make you a nice porridge."

The peasant, putting a candle in his lantern, went to the stable; and after he had given some fodder to the horses, he seated himself upon the manger. With his hands squeezed between his knees and his head bent down, he reflected over and over again what a wretched existence he had of it. "Why," thought he, "are so many men so well-off, so comfortable, whilst you must be always toiling? What care I if envy be not a virtue?—and yet I 'm not envious, I don't grudge others being well-off, only I should like to be well-off too; oh, for a quiet, easy life! Am I not worse off than a horse? He gets his fodder at the proper time, and takes no care about it. Why did my father make my brother a minister? He gets his salary without any trouble, sits in a warm room, has no care in the world; and I must slave and torment myself."

Strange to say, his very next thought, that he

would like to be made local magistrate, he would in no wise confess to himself.

He sat still a long while; then he went back again to the sitting-room, past the kitchen, where the fire was burning cheerily. He seated himself at the table and waited for his morning porridge. On the table lay an open book; his children had been reading it the previous evening: involuntarily taking it up, he began to read. Suddenly he started, rubbed his eyes, and then read again. How comes this verse here just at this moment? He kept his hand upon the book, and so easily had he caught the words, that he repeated them to himself softly with his lips, and nodded several times, as much as to say: "That 's true!" And he said aloud: "It 's all there together: short and sweet!" and he was still staring at it, when his wife brought in the smoking porridge. Taking off his cap, he folded his hands and said aloud:

"Accept God's gifts with resignation,
Content to lack what thou hast not:
In every lot there 's consolation;
There 's trouble, too, in every lot!"

The wife looked at her husband with amazement. What a strange expression was upon his face! And as he sat down and began to eat, she said: "What is the meaning of that grace? What has come to you? Where did you find it?"

"It is the best of all graces, the very best,—

real God's word. Yes, and all your life you 've never made such nice porridge before. You must have put something special in it!"

"I don't know what you mean. Stop! There 's the book lying there—ah! that 's it—and it 's by Gellert, of Leipzig."

"What! Gellert, of Leipzig! Men with ideas like that don't live now; there may have been such, a thousand years ago, in holy lands, not among us; those are the words of a saint of old."

"And I tell you they are by Gellert, of Leipzig, of whom your brother has told us; in fact, he was his tutor, and have n't you heard how pious and good he is?"

"I would n't have believed that such men still lived, and so near us, too, as Leipzig."

"Well, but those who lived a thousand years ago were also once living creatures: and over Leipzig is just the same heaven, and the same sun shines, and the same God rules, as over all other cities."

"Oh! yes, my brother has an apt pupil in you!"

"Well, and why not? I 've treasured up all he told us of Professor Gellert."

"Professor!"

"Yes, Professor!"

"A man with such a proud, new-fangled title could n't write anything like that!"

"He did n't give himself the title, and he is

poor enough withal! and how hard it has fared with him! Even from childhood he has been well acquainted with poverty: his father was a poor minister in Haynichen, with thirteen children; and Gellert, when quite a little fellow, was obliged to be a copying office-clerk: who can tell whether he did n't then contract that physical weakness of his? And now that he 's an old man, things will never go better with him; he has often no wood, and must be pinched with cold. It is with him, perhaps, as with that student of whom your brother has told us, who is as poor as a rat, and yet must read; and so in winter he lies in bed with an empty stomach, until day is far advanced; and he has his book before him, and first he takes out one hand to hold his book, and then, when that is numb with cold, the other. Ah! tongue cannot tell how poorly the man must live; and yet your brother has told me, if he has but a few pounds, he does n't think at all of himself; he always looks out for one still poorer than he is, and then gives all away: and he 's always engaged in aiding and assisting others. Oh! dear, and yet he is so poor! May be at this moment he is hungry and cold; and he is said to be in ill-health, besides."

"Wife, I would willingly do the man a good turn if I could. If, now, he had some land, I would plough, and sow, and reap, and carry, and thresh by the week together for him. I should

like to pay him attention in such a way that he might know there was at least one who cared for him. But his profession is one in which I can't be of any use to him."

"Well, just seek him out and speak with him once; you are going to-day, you know, with your wood to Leipzig. Seek him out and thank him; that sort of thing does such a man's heart good. Anybody can see him."

"Yes, yes; I should like much to see him, and hold out to him my hand,—but not empty: I wish I had something!"

"Speak to your brother, and get him to give you a note to him."

"No, no; say nothing to my brother; but it might be possible for me to meet him in the street. Give me my Sunday coat; it will come to no harm under my cloak."

When his wife brought him the coat, she said: "If, now, Gellert had a wife, or a household of his own, one might send him something; but your brother says he is a bachelor, and lives quite alone."

Christopher had never before so cheerfully harnessed his horses and put them to his wood-laden wagon; for a long while he had not given his hand so gayly to his wife at parting as to-day. Now he started with his heavily-laden vehicle through the village; the wheels creaked and crackled in the snow. At the parsonage he

stopped, and looked away yonder where his brother was still sleeping; he thought he would wake him and tell him his intention: but suddenly he whipped up his horses, and continued his route. He would n't yet bind himself to his intention—perchance it was but a passing thought; he does n't own that to himself, but he says to himself that he will surprise his brother with the news of what he has done; and then his thoughts wandered away to the good man still sleeping yonder in the city; and he hummed the verse to himself in an old familiar tune.

Wonderfully in life do effects manifest themselves, of which we have no trace. Gellert, too, heard in his dreams a singing; he knew not what it was, but it rang so consolingly, so joyously! . . . Christopher drove on, and he felt as though a bandage had been taken from his eyes; he reflected what a nice house, what a bonny wife and rosy children he had, and how warm the cloak which he had thrown over him was, and how well off were both man and beast; and through the still night he drove along, and beside him sat a spirit; but not an illusion of the brain, such as in olden time men conjured up to their terror, a good spirit sat beside him—beside the woodman who his whole life long had never believed that anything could have power over him but what had hands and feet.

It is said that, on troublous nights, evil spirits

settle upon the necks of men, and belabor them so that they gasp and sweat for very terror ; quite another sort it was to-day which sat by the woodman : and his heart was warm, and its beating quick.

In ancient times, men also carried loads of wood through the night, that heretics might be burned thereon : these men thought they were doing a good deed in helping to execute justice ; and who can say how painful it was to their hearts, when they were forced to think : To morrow, on this wood which now you carry, will shriek, and crackle, and gasp, a human being like yourself? Who can tell what black spirits settled on the necks of those who bore the wood to make the funeral-pile? How very different was it to-day with our woodman Christopher!

And earlier still, in ancient times, men brought wood to the temple, whereon they offered victims in the honor of God ; and, according to their notions, they did a good deed : for when words can no longer suffice to express the fervency of the heart, it gladly offers what it prizes, what it dearly loves, as a proof of its devotion, of the earnestness of its intent.

How differently went Christopher from the Duben Forest upon his way! He knew not whether he were intending to bring a purer offering than men had brought in bygone ages ; but his heart grew warm within him.

It was day as he arrived before the gates of Leipzig. Here there met him a funeral-procession; behind the bier the scholars of St. Thomas, in long black cloaks, were chanting. Christopher stopped and raised his hat. Whom were they burying? Supposing it were Gellert. Yes, surely, he thought, it is he: and how gladly, said he to himself, would you now have done him a kindness,—ay, even given him your wood! Yes, indeed you would, and now he is dead, and you cannot give him any help!

As soon as the train had passed, Christopher asked who was being buried. It was a simple burgher, it was not Gellert; and in the deep breath which Christopher drew lay a double signification: on the one hand, was joy that Gellert was not dead; on the other, a still small voice whispered to him that he had now really promised to give him the wood: ah! but whom had he promised?—himself: and it is easy to argue with one's own conscience.

Superstition babbles of conjuring-spells, by which, without the co-operation of the patient, the evil spirit can be summarily ejected. It would be convenient if one had that power, but, in truth, it is not so: it is long ere the evil desire and the evil habit are removed from the soul into which they have nestled; and the will, for a long while in bondage, must co-operate, if a releasing spell from without is to set the prisoner free.

One can only be guided, but himself must move his feet.

As Christopher now looked about him, he found that he had stopped close by an inn; he drove his load a little aside, went into the parlor, and drank a glass of warmed beer. There was already a goodly company, and not far from Christopher sat a husbandman with his son, a student here, who was telling him how there had been lately quite a stir. Professor Gellert had been ill, and riding a well-trained horse had been recommended for his health. Now Prince Henry of Prussia, during the Seven Years' War, at the occupation of Leipzig, had sent him a piebald, that had died a short time ago; and the Elector, hearing of it, had sent Gellert from Dresden another—a chestnut—with golden bridle, blue velvet saddle, and gold-embroidered housings. Half the city had assembled when the groom, a man with iron-gray hair, brought the horse; and for several days it was to be seen at the stable; but Gellert dared not mount it, it was so young and high-spirited. The rustic now asked his son whether the Professor did not make money enough to procure a horse of his own, to which the son answered: "Certainly not. His salary is but one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and his further gains are inconsiderable. His Lectures on Morals he gives publicly, i. e., gratis, and he has hundreds of hearers; and, therefore, at

his own lectures, which must be paid for, he has so many the fewer. To be sure, he has now and then presents from grand patrons; but no one gives him, once and for all, enough to live upon, and to have all over with a single acknowledgment."

Our friend Christopher started as he heard this; he had quite made up his mind to take Gellert the wood: but he had yet to do it. How easy were virtue, if will and deed were the same thing! if performance could immediately succeed to the moment of burning enthusiasm! But one must make way over obstacles; over those that outwardly lie in one's path, and over those that are hidden deep in the heart; and negligence has a thousand very cunning advocates.

How many go forth, prompted by good intentions, but let little hindrances turn them from their way—entirely from their way of life! In front of the house Christopher met other woodmen whom he knew, and—"You are stirring betimes!" "Prices are good to-day!" "But little comes to the market now!" was the cry from all sides. Christopher wanted to say that all that did n't concern him, but he was ashamed to confess what his design was, and an inward voice told him he must not lie. Without answering he joined the rest, and wended his way to the market; and on the road he thought: "There are Peter, and Godfrey, and John, who

have seven times your means, and not one of them, I'm sure, would think of doing anything of this kind; why will you be the kind-hearted fool? Stay! what matters it what others do or leave undone? Every man shall answer for himself. Yes, but go to market—it is better it should be so; yes, certainly, much better: sell your wood—who knows? perhaps he does n't want it—and take him the proceeds, or at least the greater portion. But is the wood still yours? You have, properly speaking, already given it away; it has only not been taken from your keeping. . . ."

There are people who cannot give; they can only let a thing be taken either by the hand of chance, or by urgency and entreaty. Christopher had such fast hold of possession, that it was only after sore wrestling that he let go; and yet his heart was kind, at least to-day it was so disposed, but the tempter whispered: "It is not easy to find so good-natured a fellow as you. How readily would you have given, had the man been in want, and your good intention must go for the deed." Still, on the other hand, there was something in him which made opposition,—an echo from those hours, when, in the still night, he was driving hither,—and it burned in him like sacred fire, and it said, "You must now accomplish what you intended. Certainly no one knows of it, and you are responsible to

no one; but you know of it yourself, and One above you knows, and how shall you be justified?" And he said to himself, "I 'll stand by this: look, it is just nine; if no one ask the price of your wood until ten o'clock, until the stroke of ten,—until it has done striking, I mean; if no one ask, then the wood belongs to Professor Gellert: but if a buyer come, then it is a sign that you need not—should not give it away. There, that 's all settled. But how? what means this? Can you make your good deed dependent on such a chance as this? No, no; I don't mean it. But yet—yet—only for a joke, I 'll try it."

Temptation kept him turning as it were in a circle, and still he stood with an apparently quiet heart by his wagon in the market. The people who heard him muttering in this way to himself looked at him with wonder, and passed by him to another wagon, as though he had not been there. It struck nine. Can you wait patiently another hour? Christopher lighted his pipe, and looked calmly on, while this and that load was driven off. It struck the quarter, half-hour, three-quarters. Christopher now put his pipe in his pocket; it had long been cold, and his hands were almost frozen; all his blood had rushed to his heart. Now it struck the full hour, stroke after stroke. At first he counted; then he fancied he had lost a stroke and miscalculated. Either voluntarily or involuntarily, he said to

himself, when it had finished striking, "You 're wrong; it is nine, not ten." He turned round that he might not see the dial, and thus he stood for some time, with his hands upon the wagon-rack, gazing at the wood. He knew not how long he had been thus standing, when some one tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "How much for the load of wood?"

Christopher turned round: there was an odd look of irresolution in his eyes as he said: "Eh? eh? what time is it?"

"Half-past ten."

"Then the wood is now no longer mine—at least to sell:" and, collecting himself, he became suddenly warm, and with firm hand turned his horses round, and begged the woodmen who accompanied him to point him out the way to the house with the "Schwarz Brett," Dr. Junius's. There he delivered a full load: at each log he took out of the wagon he smiled oddly. The wood-measurer measured the wood carefully, turning each log and placing it exactly, that there might not be a crevice anywhere.

"Why are you so over-particular to-day, pray?" asked Christopher, and he received for answer:

"Professor Gellert must have a fair load; every shaving kept back from him were a sin."

Christopher laughed aloud, and the wood-measurer looked at him with amazement; for such particularity generally provoked a quarrel.

Christopher had still some logs over; these he kept by him on the wagon. At this moment the servant Sauer came up, and asked to whom the wood belonged.

"To Professor Gellert," answered Christopher.

"The man's mad! it is n't true. Professor Gellert has not bought any wood; it is my business to look after that."

"He has not bought it, and yet it is his!" cried Christopher.

Sauer was on the point of giving the mad peasant a hearty scolding, raising his voice so much the louder, as it was striking eleven by St. Nicholas. At this moment, however, he became suddenly mute; for yonder from the University there came, with tired gait, a man of a noble countenance: at every step he made, on this side and on that, off came the hats and the caps of the passers-by, and Sauer simply called out, "There comes the Professor himself."

What a peculiar expression passed over Christopher's face! He looked at the new-comer, and so earnest was his gaze, that Gellert, who always walked with his head bowed, suddenly looked up. Christopher said: "Mr. Gellert, I am glad to see you still alive."

"I thank you," said Gellert, and made as though he would pass on; but Christopher stepped up closer to him, and, stretching out his hand to him, said: "I have taken the liberty

—I should like—will you give me your hand, Mr. Gellert?"

Gellert drew his long thin hand out of his muff and placed it in the hard oaken-like hand of the peasant; and at this moment, when the peasant's hand lay in the scholar's palm, as one felt the other's pressure in actual living grasp, there took place, though the mortal actors in the scene were all unconscious of it, a renewal of that healthy life which alone can make a people one.

How long had the learned world, wrapped up in itself, separated from the fellow-men around, thought in Latin, felt as foreigners, and lived buried in contemplation of bygone worlds! From the time of Gellert commences the ever-increasing unity of good-fellowship throughout all classes of life, kept up by mutual giving and receiving. As the scholar—as the solitary poet endeavors to work upon others by lays that quicken and songs that incite, so he in his turn is a debtor to his age, and the lonely thinking and writing become the property of all; but the effects are not seen in a moment; for higher than the most highly gifted spirit of any single man is the spirit of a nation. With the pressure which Gellert and the peasant exchanged commenced a mighty change in universal life, which never more can cease to act.

"Permit me to enter your room?" said Christopher, and Gellert nodded assent. He was so

courteous that he motioned to the peasant to enter first; however, Sauer went close after him: he thought it must be a madman; he must protect his master; the man looked just as if he were drunk. Gellert, with his amanuensis, Gödike, followed them.

Gellert, however, felt that the man must be actuated by pure motives: he bade the others retire, and took Christopher alone into his study; and, as he clasped his left with his own right hand, he asked: "Well, my good friend, what is your business?"

"Eh? oh! nothing—I 've only brought you a load of wood there—a fair, full load; however, I 'll give you the few logs which I have in my wagon, as well."

"My good man, my servant Sauer looks after buying my wood."

"It is no question of buying. No, my dear sir, I give it to you."

"Give it to me? Why me particularly?"

"Oh! sir, you do not know at all what good you do, what good you have done me; and my wife was right; why should there not be really pious men in our day too? Surely the sun still shines as he shone thousands of years ago; all is now the same as then; and the God of old is still living."

"Certainly, certainly; I am glad to see you so pious."

"Ah! believe me, dear sir, I am not always so pious; and that I am so disposed to-day is owing to you. We have no more confessionals now, but I can confess to you: and you have taken a heavier load from my heart than a wagon-load of wood. Oh! sir, I am not what I was. In my early days I was a high-spirited, merry lad, and out in the field, and indoors in the inn and the spinning-room, there was none who could sing against me; but that is long past. What has a man on whose head the grave-blossoms are growing," and he pointed to his gray head, "to do with all that trash? And besides, the Seven Years' War has put a stop to all our singing. But last night, in the midst of the fearful cold, I sang a lay set expressly for me—all old tunes go to it: and it seemed to me as though I saw a sign-post which pointed I know not whither—or, nay, I do know whither." And now the peasant related how discontented and unhappy in mind he had been, and how the words in the lay had all at once raised his spirits and accompanied him upon the journey, like a good fellow who talks to one cheerfully.

At this part of the peasant's tale Gellert folded his hands in silence, and the peasant concluded: "How I always envied others, I cannot now think why; but you I do envy, sir: I should like to be as you."

And Gellert answered: "I thank God, and

rejoice greatly that my writings have been of service to you. Think not so well of me. Would God I were really the good man I appear in your eyes! I am far from being such as I should, such as I would fain be. I write my books for my own improvement also, to show myself as well as others what manner of men we should be."

Laughing, the peasant replied: "You put me in mind of the story my poor mother used to tell of the old minister; he stood up once in the pulpit and said: 'My dear friends, I speak not only for you, but for myself also; I, too, have need of it.'"

Christopher laughed outrageously when he had finished, and Gellert smiled, and said: "Yes, whoever in the darkness lighteth another with a lamp, lighteth himself also; and the light is not part of ourselves,—it is put into our hands by Him who hath appointed the suns their courses."

The peasant stood speechless, and looked upon the ground: there was something within him which took away the power of looking up; he was only conscious that it ill became him to laugh so loudly just now, when he told the story of the old minister.

A longer pause ensued, and Gellert seemed to be lost in reflection upon this reference to a minister's work, for he said half to himself: "Oh! how would it fulfil my dearest wish to be a village-pastor! To move about among my people,

and really be one with them; the friend of their souls my whole life long, never to lose them out of my sight! Yonder goes one whom I have led into the right way; there another, with whom I still wrestle, but whom I shall assuredly save; and in them all the teaching lives which God proclaims by me. Did I not think that I should be acting against my duty, I would this moment choose a country life for the remnant of my days. When I look from my window over the country, I have before me the broad sky, of which we citizens know but little, a scene entirely new; there I stand and lose myself for half an hour in gazing and in thinking. Yes, good friend, envy no man in the rank of scholars. Look at me; I am almost always ill; and what a burden is a sickly body! How strong, on the contrary, are you! I am never happier than when, without being remarked, I can watch a dinner-table thronged by hungry men and maids. Even if these folks be not generally so happy as their superiors, at table they are certainly happier."

"Yes, sir; we relish our eating and drinking. And, lately, when felling and sorting that wood below, I was more than usually lively; it seems as though I had a notion I was to do some good with it."

"And must I permit you to make me a present?" asked Gellert, resting his chin upon his left hand.

The peasant answered: "It is not worth talking about."

"Nay, it might be well worth talking about; but I accept your present. It is pride not to be ready to accept a gift. Is not all we have a gift from God? And what one man gives another, he gives, as is most appropriately said, for God's sake. Were I your minister, I should be pleased to accept a present from you. You see, good friend, we men have no occasion to thank each other. You have given me nothing of yours, and I have given you nothing of mine. That the trees grow in the forest is none of your doing, it is the work of the Creator and Preserver of the world; and the soil is not yours; and the sun and the rain are not yours; they all are the works of His hand; and if, perchance, I have some healthy thoughts rising up in my soul, which benefit my fellow-men, it is none of mine, it is His doing. The word is not mine, and the spirit is not mine; and I am but an instrument in His hand. Therefore one man needs not to utter words of thanks to his fellow, if every one would but acknowledge who it really is that gives."

The peasant looked up in astonishment. Gellert remarked it, and said: "Understand me aright. I thank you from my heart; you have done a kind action. But that the trees grow is none of yours, and it is none of mine that thoughts arise in me; every one simply tills his field, and

tends his woodland, and the honest, assiduous toil he gives thereto is his virtue. That you felled, loaded, and brought the wood, and wish no recompense for your labor, is very thankworthy. My wood was more easily felled; but those still nights which I and all of my calling pass in heavy thought—who can tell what toil there is in them? There is in the world an adjustment which no one sees, and which but seldom discovers itself; and this and that shift thither and hither, and the scales of the balance become even, and then ceases all distinction between 'mine' and 'thine,' and in the still forest rings an axe for me, and in the silent night my spirit thinks and my pen writes for you."

The peasant passed both his hands over his temples, and his look was as though he said to himself, "Where are you? Are you still in the world? Is it a mortal man who speaks to you? Are you in Leipzig, in that populous city where men jostle one another for gain and bare existence?"

Below might be heard the creaking of the saw as the wood was being sundered: and now the near horse neighs, and Christopher is in the world again. "It may injure the horse to stand so long in the cold; and no money for the wood! but perhaps a sick horse to take home into the bargain; that would be too much," he thought.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Professor," said he—he had his hat under his arm, and was rubbing his hands —"yes, I am delighted with what I have done; and I value the lesson, believe me, more than ten loads of wood: and never shall I forget you to my dying day. And though I see you are not so poor as I had imagined, still I don't regret it. Oh! no, certainly not at all."

"Eh! did you think me so very poor, then?"

"Yes, miserably poor."

"I have always been poor, but God has never suffered me to be a single day without necessaries. I have in the world much happiness which I have not deserved, and much unhappiness I have not, which perchance I have deserved. I have found much favor with both high and low, for which I cannot sufficiently thank God. And now tell me, cannot I give you something, or obtain something for you? You are a local magistrate, I presume?"

"Why so?"

"You look like it: you might be."

Christopher had taken his hat into his hands, and was crumpling it up now; he half closed his eyes, and with a sly, inquiring glance, he peered at Gellert. Suddenly, however, the expression of his face changed, and the muscles quivered, as he said: "Sir, what a man are you! How you can dive into the recesses of one's heart! I have really pined night and day, and been cross

with the whole world, because I could not be magistrate, and you, sir, you have actually helped to overcome that in me. Oh! sir, as soon as I read that verse in your book, I had an idea, and now I see still more plainly that you must be a man of God, who can pluck the heart from one's bosom, and turn it round and round. I had thought I could never have another moment's happiness, if my neighbor, Hans Gottlieb, should be magistrate: and with that verse of yours, it has been with me as when one calms the blood with a magic spell."

"Well, my good friend, I am rejoiced to hear it: believe me, every one has in himself alone a whole host to govern. What can so strongly urge men to wish to govern others? What can it profit you to be local magistrate, when to accomplish your object you must perhaps do something wrong? What were the fame, not only of a village, but even of the whole world, if you could have no self-respect? Let it suffice for you to perform your daily duties with uprightness; let your joys be centred in your wife and children, and you will be happy. What need you more? Think not that honor and station would make you happy. Rejoice, and again I say, rejoice: 'A contented spirit is a continual feast.' I often whisper this to myself, when I feel disposed to give way to dejection: and although misery be not our fault, yet lack of en-

durance and of patience in misery is undoubtedly our fault."

"I would my wife were here too, that she also might hear this; I grudge myself the hearing of it all alone; I cannot remember it all properly, and yet I should like to tell it to her word for word. Who would have thought that, by standing upon a load of wood, one could get a peep into heaven!"

Gellert in silence bowed his head; and afterwards he said: "Yes, rejoice in your deed, as I do in your gift. Your wood is sacrificial-wood. In olden time—and it was right in principle, because man could not yet offer prayer and thanks in spirit—it was a custom and ordinance to bring something from one's possessions, as a proof of devotion: this was a sacrifice. And the more important the gift to be given, or the request to be granted, the more costly was the sacrifice. Our God will have no victims; but whatsoever you do unto one of the least of His, you do unto Him. Such are our sacrifices. My dear friend, from my heart I thank you; for you have done me a kindness, in that you have given me a real, undeniable proof, that my words have penetrated your heart, and that I do not live on for nothing: and treasure it up in your heart, that you have caused real joy to one who is often, very often, weighed down with heaviness and sorrow. You have not only kindled bright tapers upon my

Christmas-tree, but the tree itself burns, gives light, and warms: the bush burns, and is not consumed, which is an image of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and its admonition to trust in the Most High in this wilderness of life, in mourning and in woe. Oh! my dear friend, I have been nigh unto death. What a solemn, quaking stride is the stride into eternity! What a difference between ideas of death in the days of health, and on the brink of the grave! And how shall I show myself worthy of longer life? By learning better to die. And, mark, when I sit here in solitude pursuing my thoughts, keeping some and driving away others, then I can think, that in distant valleys, upon distant mountains, there are living men who carry my thoughts within their hearts; and for them I live, and they are near and dear to me, till one day we shall meet where there is no more parting, no more separation. Peasant and scholar, let us abide as we are. Give me your hand—farewell!"

And once again, the soft and the hard hand were clasped together, and Christopher really trembled as Gellert laid his hand upon his shoulder. They shook hands, and therewith something touched the heart of each more impressively, more completely, than ever words could touch it. Christopher got downstairs without knowing how: below, he threw down the extra logs of wood, which he had kept back, with

a clatter from the wagon, and then drove briskly from the city. Not till he arrived at Lindenthal did he allow himself and his horses rest or food. He had driven away empty: he had nothing on his wagon, nothing in his purse; and yet who can tell what treasures he took home; and who can tell what inextinguishable fire he left behind him yonder, by that lonely scholar!

Gellert, who usually dined at his brother's, to-day had dinner brought into his own room, remained quite alone, and did not go out again: he had experienced quite enough excitement, and society he had in his own thoughts. Oh! to find that there are open, susceptible hearts, is a blessing to him that writes in solitude, and is as wondrous to him as though he dipped his pen in streams of sunshine, and as if all he wrote were Light. The raindrop which falls from the cloud cannot tell upon what plant it drops: there is a quickening power in it, but for what? And a thought which finds expression from a human heart; an action, nay, a whole life is like the raindrop falling from the cloud: the whole period of a life endures no longer than the raindrop needs for falling. And as for knowing where your life is continued, how your work proceeds, you cannot attain to that.

And in the night all was still around: nothing was astir; the whole earth was simple rest, as Gellert sat in his room by his lonely lamp; his

hand lay upon an open book, and his eyes were fixed upon the empty air; and on a sudden came once more upon him that melancholy gloom, which so easily resumes its place after more than usual excitement.

It is as though the soul, suddenly elevated above all, must still remember the heaviness it but now experienced, though that expresses itself as tears of joy in the eye.

In Gellert, however, this melancholy had a more peculiar phase: a sort of timidity had rooted itself in him, connected with his weak chest, and that secret gnawing pain in his head; it was a fearfulness which his manner of life only tended to increase. Surrounded though he was by nothing but love and admiration in the world, he could not divest himself of the fear that all which is most horrible and terrible would burst suddenly upon him: and so he gazed fixedly before him. He passed his hand over his face, and with an effort concentrated his looks and thoughts upon surrounding objects, saying to himself almost aloud: "How comforting is light! Were there no light from without to illumine objects for us, we should perish in gloom, in the shadows of night. And light is a gentle friend that watches by us, and, when we are sunk in sorrow, points out to us that the world is still here, that it calls, and beckons us, and requires of us duty and cheerfulness. 'You must not be

lost in self,' it says, 'see! the world is still here:' and a friend beside us is as a light which illumines surrounding objects; we cannot forget them, we must see them and mingle with them. How hard is life, and how little I accomplish! I would fain awaken the whole world to goodness and to love; but my voice is weak, my strength is insufficient: how insignificant is all I do!"

And now he rose up and strode across the room; and he stood at the hearth where the fire was burning, made of wood given to him that very day, and his thoughts reverted to the man who had given it. Why had he not asked his name, and where he came from? Perchance he might have been able in thought to follow him all the way, as he drove home; and now . . . but yet 'tis more, 'tis better as it is: it is not an individual, it is not So-and-so, who has shown his gratitude, but all the world by the mouth of one. "The kindnesses I receive," he thought, "are indeed trials; but yet I ought to accept them with thanks. I will try henceforth to be a benefactor to others as others are to me, without display, and with grateful thanks to God, our highest Benefactor: this will I do, and search no further for the why and for the wherefore." And once more a voice spoke within him, and he stood erect, and raised his arms on high. "Who knows," he thought, "whether at this moment I have not been in this or that place, to this or that

man, a brother, a friend, a comforter, a saviour; and from house to house, may be, my spirit travels, awakening, enlivening, refreshing—yonder in the attic, where burns a solitary light; and afar in some village a mother is sitting by her child, and hearing him repeat the thoughts I have arranged in verse; and peradventure some solitary old man, who is waiting for death, is now sitting by his fireside, and his lips are uttering my words."

"And yonder in the church, the choir is chanting a hymn of yours; could you have written this hymn without its vigor in your heart? Oh! no, it *must* be there." And with trembling he thought: "There is nothing so small as to have no place in the government of God! Should you not then believe that He suffered this day's incident to happen for your joy? Oh! were it so, what happiness were yours! A heart renewed." . . . He moved to the window, looked up to heaven, and prayed inwardly: "My soul is with my brothers and my sisters: nay, it is with Thee, my God, and in humility I acknowledge how richly Thou hast blessed me. And if, in the kingdom of the world to come, a soul should cry to me: 'Thou didst guide and cheer me on to happiness eternal!' all hail! my friend, my benefactor, my glory in the presence of God. . . . In these thoughts let me die, and pardon me my weakness and my sins!"

"And the evening and morning were the first day."

At early morning, Gellert was sitting at his table, and reading according to his invariable custom, first of all in the Bible. He never left the Bible open—he always shut it with a peaceful, devotional air, after he had read therein: there was something grateful as well as reverential in his manner of closing the volume; the holy words should not lie uncovered.

To-day, however, the Bible was lying open when he rose. His eye fell upon the history of the creation, and at the words, "And the evening and the morning were the first day," he leaned back his head against the arm-chair, and kept his hand upon the book, as though he would grasp with his hand also the lofty thought, how night and day were divided.

For a long while he sat thus, and he was wondrously bright in spirit, and a soft reminiscence dawned upon him; of a bright day in childhood, when he had been so happy, and in Haynichen, his native place, had gone out with his father for a walk. An inward warmth roused his heart to quicker pulsation; and suddenly he started and looked about him: he had been humming a tune.

Up from the street came the busy sound of day: at other times how insufferable he had found it! and now how joyous it seemed that men

should bestir themselves, and turn to all sorts of occupations! There was a sound of crumbling snow: and how nice to have a house and a blaze upon the hearth! "And the evening and the morning were the first day!" And man getteth himself a light in the darkness: but how long, O man! could you make it endure? What could you do with your artificial light, if God did not cause His sun to shine? Without it grows no grass, no corn. On the hand lying upon the book there fell a bright sunbeam. How soon, at other times, would Gellert have drawn the defensive curtain! Now he watches the little motes that play about in the sunbeam.

The servant brought coffee, and the amanuensis, Gödike, asked if there were anything to do. Generally, Gellert scarce lifted his head from his books, hastily acknowledging the attention and reading on in silence; to-day, he motioned to Gödike to stay, and said to Sauer, "Another cup: Mr. Gödike will take coffee with me. God has given me a day of rejoicing." Sauer brought the cup, and Gellert said: "Yes, God has given me a day of rejoicing, and what I am most thankful for is, that He has granted me strength to thank Him with all my heart: not so entirely, however, as I should like."

"Thank God, Mr. Professor, that you are once more in health, and cheerful: and permit me, Mr. Professor, to tell you that I was myself also ill a

short time ago, and I then learned a lesson which I shall never forget. Who is most grateful? The convalescent. He learns to love God and His beautiful world anew; he is grateful for everything, and delighted with everything. What a flavor has his first cup of coffee! How he enjoys his first walk outside the house, outside the gate! The houses, the trees, all give us greeting: all is again in us full of health and joy!" So said Gödike, and Gellert rejoined:

"You are a good creature, and have just spoken good words. Certainly, the convalescent is the most grateful. We are, however, for the most part, sick in spirit, and have not strength to recover: and a sickly, stricken spirit is the heaviest pain."

Long time the two sat quietly together: it struck eight. Gellert started up, and cried irritably: "There, now, you have allowed me to forget that I must be on my way to the University."

"The vacation has begun: Mr. Professor has no lecture to-day."

"No lecture to-day? Ah! and I believe to-day is just the time when I could have told my young friends something that would have benefited them for their whole lives."

There was a shuffling of many feet outside the door: the door opened, and several boys from St. Thomas' School-choir advanced and sang to

Gellert some of his own hymns; and as they chanted the verse—

> "And haply there—oh! grant it, Heaven!
> Some blessed saint will greet me too;
> 'All hail! all hail! to you was given
> To save my life and soul, to you!'
> O God! my God! what joy to be
> The winner of a soul to thee!"

Gellert wept aloud, folded his hands, and raised his eyes to heaven.

A happier Christmas than that of 1768 had Gellert never seen; and it was his last. Scarcely a year after, on the 13th of December, 1769, Gellert died a pious, tranquil death, such as he had ever coveted.

As the long train which followed his bier moved to the churchyard of St. John's, Leipzig, a peasant with his wife and children in holiday clothes entered among the last. It was Christopher with his family. The whole way he had been silent: and whilst his wife wept passionately at the pastor's touching address, it was only by the working of his features that Christopher showed how deeply moved he was.

But on the way home he said: "I am glad I did him a kindness in his lifetime; it would now be too late."

The summer after, when he built a new house,

he had this verse placed upon it as an inscription:

"Accept God's gifts with resignation,
Content to lack what thou hast not:
In every lot there's consolation;
There's trouble, too, in every lot."

A GHETTO VIOLET

BY

LEOPOLD KOMPERT

From "Christian and Leah." Translated by A. S. Arnold. Published by J. M. Dent & Co.

A GHETTO VIOLET

BY LEOPOLD KOMPERT

THROUGH the open window came the clear trill of a canary singing blithely in its cage. Within the tidy, homely little room a pale-faced girl and a youth of slender frame listened intently while the bird sang its song. The girl was the first to break the silence.

"Ephraim, my brother!" she said.

"What is it, dear Viola?"

"I wonder does the birdie know that it is the Sabbath to-day?"

"What a child you are!" answered Ephraim.

"Yes, that 's always the way; when you clever men can't explain a thing, you simply dismiss the question by calling it childish," Viola exclaimed, as though quite angry. "And, pray, why should n't the bird know? The whole week it scarcely sang a note: to-day it warbles and warbles so that it makes my head ache. And what 's the reason? Every Sabbath it 's just the same, I notice it regularly. Shall I tell you what my idea is?

"The whole week long the little bird looks in-

to our room and sees nothing but the humdrum of work-a-day life. To-day it sees the bright rays of the Sabbath lamp and the white Sabbath cloth upon the table. Don't you think I 'm right, Ephraim?"

"Wait, dear Viola," said Ephraim, and he went to the cage.

The bird's song suddenly ceased.

"Now you 've spoilt its Sabbath!" cried the girl, and she was so excited that the book which had been lying upon her lap fell to the ground.

Ephraim turned towards her; he looked at her solemnly, and said quietly:

"Pick up your prayer-book first, and then I 'll answer. A holy book should not be on the ground like that. Had our mother dropped her prayer-book, she would have kissed it. . . . Kiss it, Viola, my child!"

Viola did so.

"And now I 'll tell you, dear Viola, what I think is the reason why the bird sings so blithely to-day. . . . Of course, I don't say I 'm right."

Viola's brown eyes were fixed inquiringly upon her brother's face.

"How seriously you talk to-day," she said, making a feeble attempt at a smile. "I was only joking. Must n't I ask if the bird knows anything about the Sabbath?"

"There are subjects it is sinful to joke about, and this may be one of them, Viola."

"You really quite frighten me, Ephraim."

"You little goose, I don't want to frighten you," said Ephraim, while a faint flush suffused his features. "I 'll tell you my opinion about the singing of the bird. I think, dear Viola, that our little canary knows . . . that before long it will change its quarters."

"You 're surely not going to sell it or give it away?" cried the girl, in great alarm; and springing to her feet, she quickly drew her brother away from the cage.

"No, I 'm not going to sell it nor give it away," said Ephraim, whose quiet bearing contrasted strongly with his sister's excitement. "Is it likely that I should do anything that would give you pain? And yet, I have but to say one word . . . and I 'll wager that you will be the first to open the cage and say to the bird, 'Fly, fly away, birdie, fly away home!'"

"Never, never!" cried the girl.

"Viola," said Ephraim beseechingly, "I have taken a vow. Surely you would not have me break it?"

"A vow?" asked his sister.

"Viola," Ephraim continued, as he bent his head down to the girl 's face, "I have vowed to myself that whenever he . . . our father . . . should return, I would give our little bird its freedom. It shall be free, free as he will be."

"Ephraim!"

"He is coming— he is already on his way home."

Viola flung her arms round her brother's neck. For a long time brother and sister remained locked in a close embrace.

Meanwhile the bird resumed its jubilant song.

"Do you hear how it sings again?" said Ephraim; and he gently stroked his sister's hair. "It knows that it will soon be free."

"A father out of jail!" sobbed Viola, as she released herself from her brother's arms.

"He has had his punishment, dear Viola!" said Ephraim softly.

Viola turned away. There was a painful silence, and then she looked up at her brother again. Her face was aglow, her eyes sparkled with a strange fire; she was trembling with agitation. Never before had Ephraim seen her thus.

"Ephraim, my brother," she commenced, in that measured monotone so peculiar to intense emotion, "with the bird you can do as you please. You can set it free, or, if you like, you can wring its neck. But as for him, I 'll never look in his face again, from me he shall not have a word of welcome. He broke our mother's heart . . . our good, good mother; he has dishonored himself and us. And I can never forget it."

"Is it right for a child to talk like that of her own father?" said Ephraim in a tremulous voice.

"When a child has good cause to be ashamed of her own father!" cried Viola.

"Oh, my Viola, you must have forgotten dear mother's dying words. Don't you remember, as she opened her eyes for the last time, how she gathered up her failing strength, and raising herself in her bed, 'Children,' she said, 'my memory will protect you both, yea, and your father too.' Viola, have you forgotten?"

Had you entered that little room an hour later, a touching sight would have met your eyes. Viola was seated on her brother's knee, her arms round his neck, whilst Ephraim with the gentle love of a brother for a younger sister, was stroking her hair, and whispering in her ear sweet words of solace.

The bird-cage was empty. . . . That evening Ephraim sat up till midnight. Outside in the Ghetto reigned the stillness of night.

All at once Ephraim rose from his chair, walked to the old bureau which stood near the door, opened it, and took from it a bulky volume, which he laid upon the table in front of him. But he did not seem at all bent upon reading. He began fingering the pages, until he came upon a bundle of bank-notes, and these he proceeded to count, with a whispering movement of his lips. He had but three or four more notes still to count, when his sharp ear detected the sound of stealthy footsteps, in the little courtyard in front

of the house. Closing the book, and hastily putting it back again in the old bureau, Ephraim sprang to the window and opened it.

"Is that you, father?" he cried.

There was no answer.

Ephraim repeated his question.

He strained his eyes, peering into the dense darkness, but no living thing could he see. Then quite close to him a voice cried: "Make no noise . . . and first put out the light."

"Heavens! Father, it is you then . . . !" Ephraim exclaimed.

"Hush!" came in a whisper from without, "first put out the light."

Ephraim closed the window, and extinguished the light. Then, with almost inaudible step, he walked out of the room into the dark passage; noiselessly he proceeded to unbolt the street-door. Almost at the same moment a heavy hand clasped his own.

"Father, father!" Ephraim cried, trying to raise his parent's hand to his lips.

"Make no noise," the man repeated, in a somewhat commanding tone.

With his father's hand in his, cautiously feeling his way, Ephraim led him into the room. In the room adjoining lay Viola, sleeping peacefully. . . .

Time was when "Wild" Ascher's welcome home had been far otherwise. Eighteen years

before, upon that very threshold which he now crossed with halting, stealthy steps, as of a thief in the night, stood a fair and loving wife, holding a sturdy lad aloft in her arms, so that the father might at once see, as he turned the street corner, that wife and child were well and happy. Not another Ghetto in all Bohemia could show a handsomer and happier couple than Ascher and his wife. "Wild" Ascher was one of those intrepid, venturesome spirits, to whom no obstacle is so great that it cannot be surmounted. And the success which crowned his long, persistent wooing was often cited as striking testimony to his indomitable will. Gudule was famous throughout the Ghetto as "the girl with the wonderful eyes," eyes—so the saying ran—into which no man could look and think of evil. During the earlier years of their married life those unfathomable brown eyes exercised on Ascher the full power of their fascination. A time came, however, when he alleged that those very eyes had been the cause of all his ruin.

Gudule's birthplace was far removed from the Ghetto, where Ascher had first seen the light. Her father was a wealthy farmer in a secluded village in Lower Bohemia. But distant though it was from the nearest town of any importance, the solitary grange became the centre of attraction to all the young swains far and near. But there was none who found favor in Gudule's

eyes save "Wild Ascher," in spite of many a friendly warning to beware of him. One day, just before the betrothal of the young people, an anonymous letter was delivered at the grange. The writer, who called himself an old friend, entreated the farmer to prevent his dear child from becoming the wife of one who was suspected of being a gambler. The farmer was of an easy-going, indulgent nature, shunning care and anxiety as a very plague. Accordingly, no sooner had he read the anonymous missive than he handed it to his daughter, as though its contents were no concern of his.

When Gudule had read the letter to the end, she merely remarked: "Father, this concerns me, and nobody else."

And so the matter dropped.

Not until the wedding-day, half an hour before the ceremony, when the marriage canopy had already been erected in the courtyard, did the farmer sum up courage to revert to the warning of the unknown letter-writer. Taking his future son-in-law aside, he said:

"Ascher, is it true that you gamble?"

"Father," Ascher answered with equal firmness, "Gudule's eyes will save me!" Ascher had uttered no untruth when he gave his father-in-law this assurance. He spoke in all earnestness, for like every one else he knew the magnetic power of Gudule's eyes.

Nowhere, probably, does the grim, consuming pestilence of gaming claim more victims than in the Ghetto. The ravages of drink and debauchery are slight indeed; but the tortuous streets can show too many a humble home haunted by the spectres of ruin and misery which stalked across the threshold when the *first card game* was played.

It was with almost feverish anxiety that the eyes of the Ghetto were fixed upon the development of a character like Ascher's; they followed his every step with the closest attention. Long experience had taught the Ghetto that no gambler could be trusted.

As though conscious that all eyes were upon him, Ascher showed himself most punctilious in the discharge of even the minutest of communal duties which devolved upon him as a denizen of the Ghetto, and his habits of life were almost ostentatiously regular and decorous. His business had prospered, and Gudule had borne him a son.

"Well, Gudule, my child," the farmer asked his daughter on the day when his grandson was received into the covenant of Abraham,—"well, Gudule, was the letter right?"

"What letter?" asked Gudule.

"That in which your husband was called a gambler."

"And can you still give a thought to such a letter?" was Gudule's significant reply.

Three years later, Gudule's father came to visit her. This time she showed him his second grandchild, her little Viola. He kissed the children, and round little Viola's neck clasped three rows of pearls, "that the child may know it had a grandfather once."

"And where are your pearls, Gudule?" he asked, "those left you by your mother,—may she rest in peace! She always set such store by them."

"Those, father?" Gudule replied, turning pale; "oh, my husband has taken them to a goldsmith in Prague. They require a new clasp."

"I see," remarked her father. Notwithstanding his limited powers of observation, it did not escape the old man's eyes that Gudule looked alarmingly wan and emaciated. He saw it, and it grieved his very soul. He said nothing however: only, when leaving, and after he had kissed the *Mezuza*,* he said to Gudule (who, with little Viola in her arms, went with him to the door), in a voice quivering with suppressed emotion: "Gudule, my child, the pearl necklet which I have given your little Viola has a clasp strong enough to last a hundred years . . . you need never, therefore, give it to your husband to have a new clasp made for it." And without bestowing an-

* Small cylinder inclosing a roll of parchment inscribed with the Hebrew word *Shadai* (Almighty) and with other texts, which is affixed to the lintel of every Jewish house.

other glance upon his child the easy-going man left the house. It was his last visit. Within the year Gudule received a letter from her eldest brother telling her that their father was dead, and that she would have to keep the week of mourning for him. Ever since his last visit to her —her brother wrote—the old man had been somewhat ailing, but knowing his vigorous constitution, they had paid little heed to his complaints. It was only during the last few weeks that a marked loss of strength had been noticed. This was followed by fever and delirium. Whenever he was asked whether he would not like to see Gudule, his only answer was: "She must not give away the clasp of little Viola's necklet." And but an hour before his death, he raised his voice, and loudly called for "the letter." Nobody knew what letter. "Gudule knows where it is," he said, with a gentle shake of his head. Those were the last words he spoke.

Had the old man's eyes deceived him on the occasion of his last visit to his son-in-law's house? No! For, setting aside the incident of the missing pearls, the whole Ghetto could long since have told him that the warning of the anonymous letter was not unfounded—for Gudule was the wife of a gambler.

With the resistless impetuosity of a torrent released from its prison of ice and snow, the old invincible disease had again overwhelmed its

victim. Gudule noticed the first signs of it when one day her husband returned home from one of his business journeys earlier than he had arranged. Gudule had not expected him.

"Why did you not come to meet me with the children?" he cried peevishly; "do you begrudge me even that pleasure?"

"*I* begrudge you a pleasure?" Gudule ventured to remark, as she raised her swimming eyes to his face.

"Why do you look at me so tearfully?" he almost shouted.

Ascher loved his wife, and when he saw the effect which his rough words had produced, he tenderly embraced her. "Am I not right, Gudule?" he said, "after a man has been working and slaving the livelong week, don't you think he looks forward with longing eyes for his dear children to welcome him at his door?"

At that moment Gudule felt the long latent suspicion revive in her that her husband was not speaking the truth. As if written in characters of fire, the words of that letter now came back to her memory; she knew now what was the fate that awaited her and her children.

Thenceforward, all the characteristic tokens of a gambler's life, all the vicissitudes which attend his unholy calling, followed close upon each other in grim succession. Most marked was the disturbance which his mental equilibrium was un-

dergoing. Fits of gloomy despondency were succeeded, with alarming rapidity, by periods of tumultuous exaltation. One moment it would seem as though Gudule and the children were to him the living embodiment of all that was precious and lovable, whilst at other times he would regard them with sullen indifference. It soon became evident to Gudule that her husband's affairs were in a very bad way, for her housekeeping allowance no longer came to her with its wonted regularity. But what grieved and alarmed her most, was the fact that Ascher was openly neglecting every one of his religious duties. To return home late on Friday night, long after sunset had ushered in the Sabbath, was now a common practice. Once even it happened, that with his clothes covered with dust, he came home from one of his business tours on a Sabbath morning, when the people in holiday attire were wending their way to the synagogue.

Nevertheless, not a sound of complaint escaped Gudule's lips. Hers was one of those proud, sensitive natures, such as are to be met with among all classes and amid all circumstances of life, in Ghetto and in secluded village, no less than among the most favored ones of the earth. Had she not cast to the winds the well-intentioned counsel given her in that unsigned letter? Why then should she complain

and lament, now that the seed had borne fruit? She shrank from alluding before her husband to the passion which day by day, nay, hour by hour, tightened its hold upon him. She would have died sooner than permit the word "gambler" to pass her lips. Besides, did not her eyes tell Ascher what she suffered? Those very eyes were, according to Ascher, the cause of his rapid journey along the road to ruin.

"Why do you look at me so, Gudule?" he would testily ask her, at the slightest provocation.

Often when, as he explained, he had had "a specially good week," he would bring home the costliest gifts for his children. Gudule, however, made no use whatever of these trinkets, neither for herself nor for the children. She put the things away in drawers and cupboards, and never looked at them, more especially as she observed that, under some pretext or another, Ascher generally took those glittering things away again, "in order to exchange them for others," he said: as often as not never replacing them at all.

"Gudule!" he said one day, when he happened to be in a particularly good humor, "why do you let the key remain in the door of that bureau where you keep so many valuables?"

And again Gudule regarded him with those unfathomable eyes.

"There, you 're . . . looking at me again!" he exclaimed with sudden vehemence.

"They 're safe enough in the cupboard," Gudule said, smiling, "why should I lock it?"

"Gudule, do you mean to say . . ." he cried, raising his hand as for a blow. Then he fell back in his chair, and his frame was shaken with sobs.

"Gudule, my heart's love," he cried, "I am not worthy that your eyes should rest on me. Everywhere, wherever I go, they look at me, those eyes . . . and that is my ruin. If business is bad, your eyes ask me, 'Why did you mix yourself up with these things, without a thought of wife or children?' . . . Then I feel as if some evil spirit possessed me and tortured my soul. Oh, why can't you look at me again as you did when you were my bride?—then you looked so happy, so lovely! At other times I think: 'I shall yet grasp fortune with both hands . . . and then I can face my Gudule's eyes again.' But now, now . . . oh, don't look at me, Gudule!"

There spoke the self-reproaching voice, which sometimes burst forth unbidden from a suffering soul.

As for Gudule, she already knew how to appreciate this cry of her husband's conscience at its true value. It was not that she felt one moment's doubt as to its sincerity, but she knew that so far as it affected the future, it was a mere cry and nothing more.

The years rolled on. The children were growing up. Ephraim had entered his fifteenth year. Viola was a little pale girl of twelve. In the opinion of the Ghetto they were the most extraordinary children in the world. In the midst of the harassing life to which her marriage with the gambler had brought her, Gudule so reared them that they grew to be living reflections of her own inmost being. People wondered when they beheld the strange development of "Wild" Ascher's children.

Their natures were as proud and reserved as that of their mother. They did not associate with the youth of the Ghetto; it seemed as though they were not of their kind, as though an insurmountable barrier divided them. And many a bitter sneer was hurled at Gudule's head.

"Does she imagine," she often heard people whisper, "that because her father was a farmer her children are princes? Let her remember that her husband is but a common gambler."

How different would have been their thoughts had they known that the children were Gudule's sole comfort. What their father had never heard from her, she poured into their youthful souls. No tear their mother shed was unobserved by them; they knew when their father had lost, and when he had won; they knew, too, all the varying moods of his unhinged mind; and in this terrible school of misery they acquired an in-

stinctive intelligence, which in the eyes of strangers seemed mere precocity.

The two children, however, had early given evidence of a marked difference in disposition. Ephraim's nature was one of an almost feminine gentleness, whilst Viola was strong-willed and proudly reserved.

"Mother," she said one day, "do you think he will continue to play much longer?"

"Viola, how can you talk like that?" Ephraim cried, greatly disturbed.

Thereupon Viola impetuously flung her arms round her mother's neck, and for some moments she clung to her with all the strength of her passionate nature. It was as though in that wild embrace she would fain pour forth the long pent-up sorrows of her blighted childhood.

"Mother!" she cried, "you are so good to him. Never, never shall he have such kindness from me!"

"Ephraim," said Gudule, "speak to your sister. In her sinful anger, Viola would revenge herself upon her own father. Does it so beseem a Jewish child?"

"Why does he treat you so cruelly, then?" Viola almost hissed the words.

Soon after fell the final crushing blow. Ascher had been away from home for some weeks, when one day Gudule received a letter, dated from a prison in the neighborhood of Vienna.

In words of genuine sympathy the writer explained that Ascher had been unfortunate enough to forge the signature to a bill. She would not see him again for the next five years. God comfort her! The letter was signed: "A fellow-sufferer with your husband."

As it had been with her old father, after he had bidden her a last farewell, so it was now with Gudule. From that moment her days were numbered, and although not a murmur escaped her lips, hour by hour she wasted away.

One Friday evening, shortly after the seven-branched Sabbath lamp had been lit, Gudule, seated in her arm-chair, out of which she had not moved all day, called the two children to her. A bright smile hovered around her lips, an unwonted fire burned in her still beautiful eyes, her bosom heaved . . . in the eyes of her children she seemed strangely changed. "Children," said she, "come and stand by me. Ephraim, you stand here on my right, and you, dear Viola, on my left. I would like to tell you a little story, such as they tell little children to soothe them to sleep. Shall I?"

"Mother!" they both cried, as they bent towards her.

"You must not interrupt me, children," she observed, still with that strange smile on her lips, "but leave me to tell my little story in my own way.

"Listen, children," she resumed, after a brief

pause. "Every human being—be he ever so wicked—if he have done but a single good deed on earth, will, when he arrives above, in the seventh heaven, get his *Sechûs*, that is to say, the memory of the good he has done here below will be remembered and rewarded bountifully by the Almighty." Gudule ceased speaking. Suddenly a change came over her features: her breath came and went in labored gasps; but her brown eyes still gleamed brightly.

In tones well-nigh inaudible she continued: "When Jerusalem, the Holy City, was destroyed, the dead rose up out of their graves . . . the holy patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob . . . and also Moses, and Aaron his brother . . . and David the King . . . and prostrating themselves before God's throne they sobbed: 'Dost Thou not remember the deeds we have done? . . . Wouldst Thou now utterly destroy all these our children, even to the innocent babe at the breast?' But the Almighty was inexorable.'

"Then Sarah, our mother, approached the Throne . . . When God beheld her, He covered His face, and wept. 'Go,' said He, 'I cannot listen to thee.' . . . But she exclaimed . . . 'Dost Thou no longer remember the tears I shed before I gave birth to my Joseph and Benjamin . . . and dost Thou not remember the day when they buried me yonder, on the borders of the Promised Land . . . and now, must mine eyes

behold the slaughter of my children, their disgrace, and their captivity?' . . . Then God cried: 'For *thy* sake will I remember thy children and spare them.' . . ."

"Would you like to know," Gudule suddenly cried, with uplifted voice, "what this *Sechûs* is like? It has the form of an angel, and it stands near the Throne of the Almighty. . . . But, since the days of Rachel, our mother, it is the *Sechûs* of a mother that finds most favor in God's eyes. When a mother dies, her soul straightway soars heavenward, and there it takes its place amid the others.

"'Who art thou?' asks God. 'I am the *Sechûs* of a mother,' is the answer, 'of a mother who has left children behind her on earth.' 'Then do thou stand here and keep guard over them!' says God. And when it is well with the children, it is the *Sechûs* of a mother which has caused them to prosper, and when evil days befall them . . . it is again the Angel who stands before God and pleads: 'Dost Thou forget that these children no longer have a mother?' . . . and the evil is averted. . . ."

Gudule's voice had sunk to a mere whisper. Her eyes closed, her head fell back, her breathing became slower and more labored. "Are you still there, children?" she softly whispered.

Anxiously they bent over her. Then once again she opened her eyes.

"I see you still"—the words came with difficulty from her blanched lips—"you, Ephraim, and you, my little Viola. . . . I am sure my *Sechûs* will plead for you . . . for you and your father." They were Gudule's last words. When her children, whose eyes had never as yet been confronted with Death, called her by her name, covering her icy hands with burning kisses, their mother was no more. . . .

Who can tell what influence causes the downtrodden blade to raise itself once more! Is it the vivifying breath of the west wind, or a mysterious power sent forth from the bosom of Mother Earth? It was a touching sight to see how those two children, crushed as they were beneath the weight of a twofold blow, raised their heads again, and in their very desolation found new-born strength. And it filled the Ghetto with wonder. For what were they but the offspring of a gambler? Or was it the spirit of Gudule, their mother, that lived in them?

After Gudule's death, her eldest brother, the then owner of the grange, came over to discuss the future of his sister's children. He wished Ephraim and Viola to go with him to his home in Lower Bohemia, where he could find them occupation. The children, however, were opposed to the idea. They had taken no previous

counsel together, yet, upon this point, both were in perfect accord,—they would prefer to be left in their old home.

"When father comes back again," said Ephraim, "he must know where to find us. But to you, Uncle Gabriel, he would never come."

The uncle then insisted that Viola at least should accompany him, for he had daughters at home whom she could assist in their duties in the house and on the farm. But the child clung to Ephraim, and with flaming eyes, and in a voice of proud disdain, which filled the simple farmer with something like terror, she cried:

"Uncle, you have enough to do to provide for your own daughters; don't let *me* be an additional burden upon you; besides, sooner would I wander destitute through the world than be separated from my brother."

"And what do you propose to do then?" exclaimed the uncle, after he had somewhat recovered from his astonishment at Viola's vehemence.

"You see, Uncle Gabriel," said Ephraim, a sudden flush overspreading his grief-stricken features, "you see I have thought about it, and I have come to the conclusion that this is the best plan. Viola shall keep house, and I . . . I 'll start a business."

"*You* start a business?" cried the uncle with a loud laugh. "Perhaps you can tell me what

price I 'll get for my oats next market day? A business! . . . and *what* business, my lad?"

"Uncle," said Ephraim, "if I dispose of all that is left us, I shall have enough money to buy a small business. Others in our position have done the same . . . and then . . ."

"Well, and then?" the uncle cried, eagerly anticipating his answer.

"Then the *Sechûs* of our mother will come to our aid," Ephraim said softly.

The farmer's eyes grew dim with moisture; his sister had been very dear to him.

"As I live!" he cried, brushing his hand across his eyes, "you are true children of my sister Gudule. That 's all *I* can say."

Then, as though moved by a sudden impulse, he quickly produced, from the depths of his overcoat, a heavy pocketbook. "There!" . . . he cried, well-nigh out of breath, "there are a hundred gulden for you, Ephraim. With that you can, at all events, make a start; and then you need n't sell the few things you still have. There . . . put the money away . . . oats have n't fetched any price at all to-day, 't is true; but for the sake of Gudule's children, I don't mind what I do . . . Come, put it away, Ephraim . . . and may God bless you, and make you prosper."

"Uncle!" cried Ephraim, as he raised the farmer's hand to his lips, "is all this to be mine? All this?"

"Yes, my boy, yes; it *is* a deal of money is n't it?" . . . said Gudule's brother, accompanying his words with a sounding slap on his massive thigh. "I should rather think it is. With that you can do something, at all events . . . and shall I tell you something? In Bohemia the oat crop is, unfortunately, very bad this season. But in Moravia it 's splendid, and is two groats cheaper. . . . So there 's your chance, Ephraim, my child; you 've got the money, buy!" All at once a dark cloud overspread his smiling face.

"It 's a lot of money, Ephraim, that I am giving you . . . many a merchant can't lay his hands on it," he said, hesitatingly; "but if . . . you were to . . . gam—"

The word remained unfinished, for upon his arm he suddenly felt a sensation as of a sharp, pricking needle.

"Uncle Gabriel!" cried Viola—for it was she who had gripped his arm—and the child's cheeks were flaming, whilst her lips curled with scorn, and her white teeth gleamed like those of a beast of prey. "Uncle Gabriel!" she almost shrieked, "if you don't trust Ephraim, then take your money back again . . . it 's only because you are our mother's brother that we accept it from you at all. . . . Ephraim shall repay you to the last farthing. . . . Ephraim does n't gamble . . . you sha 'n't lose a single penny of it."

With a shake of his head the farmer regarded

the strange child. He felt something like annoyance rise within him; an angry word rose to the lips of the usually good-tempered man. But it remained unsaid; he was unable to remove his eyes from the child's face.

"As I live," he muttered, "she has Gudule's very eyes."

And with another thumping slap on his leg, he merrily exclaimed:

"All right, we 'll leave it so then. . . . If Ephraim does n't repay me, I 'll take *you*, you wild thing . . . for you 've stood surety for your brother, and then I 'll take you away, and keep you with me at home. Do you agree . . . you little spit-fire, eh?"

"Yes, uncle!" cried Viola.

"Then give me a kiss, Viola."

The child hesitated for a moment, then she laid her cheek upon her uncle's face.

"Ah, now I 've got you, you little spit-fire," he cried, kissing her again and again. "Are n't you ashamed now to have snapped your uncle up like that?"

Then after giving Ephraim some further information about the present price of oats, and the future prospects of the crops, with a side-shot at the chances of wool, skins, and other merchandise, he took his leave.

There was great surprise in the Ghetto when the barely fifteen-year-old lad made his first

start in business. Many made merry over "the great merchant," but before the year was ended, the sharp-seeing eyes of the Ghetto saw that Ephraim had "a lucky hand." Whatever he undertook he followed up with a calmness and tact which often baffled the restless activity of many a big dealer, with all his cuteness and trickery. Whenever Ephraim, with his pale, sad face, made his appearance at a farmstead, to negotiate for the purchase of wool, or some such matter, it seemed as though some invisible messenger had gone before him to soften the hearts of the farmers. "No one ever gets things as cheap as you do," he was assured by many a farmer's wife, who had been won by the unconscious eloquence of his dark eyes. No longer did people laugh at "the little merchant," for nothing so quickly kills ridicule as success.

When, two years later, his Uncle Gabriel came again to see how the children were getting on, Ephraim was enabled to repay, in hard cash, the money he had lent him.

"Oho!" cried Gudule's brother, with big staring eyes, as he clutched his legs with both hands, "how have you managed in so short a time to save so much? D' ye know that that 's a great deal of money?"

"I 've had good luck, uncle," said Ephraim, modestly.

"You 've been . . . playing, perhaps?"

The words fell bluntly from the rough countryman, but hardly had they been uttered, when Viola sprang from her chair, as though an adder had stung her. "Uncle," she cried, and a small fist hovered before Gabriel's eyes in such a threatening manner that he involuntarily closed them. But the child, whose features reminded him so strongly of his dead sister, could not make him angry.

"Ephraim," he exclaimed, in a jocund tone, warding off Viola with his hands, "you take my advice. Take this little spit-fire with you into the village one day . . . they may want a young she-wolf there." Then he pocketed the money.

"Well, Ephraim," said he, "may God bless you, and grant you further luck. But you won't blame me if I take the money,—I can do with it, and in oats, as you know, there 's some chance of good business just now. But I am glad to see that you 're so prompt at paying. Never give too much credit! That 's always my motto; trust means ruin, and eats up a man's business, as rats devour the contents of a corn-barn."

There was but one thing that constantly threw its dark shadow across these two budding lives, —it was the dark figure in a distant prison. This it was that saddened the souls of the two children with a gloom which no sunshine could dispel. When on Fridays Ephraim returned,

fatigued and weary from his work, to the home over which Viola presided with such pathetic housewifely care, no smile of welcome was on her face, no greeting on his. Ephraim, 't is true, told his sister where he had been, and what he had done, but in the simplest words there vibrated that tone of unutterable sadness which has its constant dwelling-place in such sorely-tried hearts.

Meanwhile, a great change had come over Viola. Nature continues her processes of growth and development 'mid the tempests of human grief, and often the fiercer the storm the more beautiful the after effects. Viola was no longer the pale child, "the little spit-fire," by whom her Uncle Gabriel's arm had been seized in such a violent grip. A womanly gentleness had come over her whole being, and already voices were heard in the *Ghetto* praising her grace and beauty, which surpassed even the loveliness of her dead mother in her happiest days. Many an admiring eye dwelt upon the beautiful girl, many a longing glance was cast in the direction of the little house, where she dwelt with her brother. But the daughter of a "gambler," the child of a man who was undergoing imprisonment for the indulgence of his shameful vice! That was a picture from which many an admirer shrank with horror!

One day Ephraim brought home a young

canary for his sister. When he handed her the bird in its little gilt cage, her joy knew no bounds, and showering kisses by turns upon her brother, and on the wire-work of the cage, her eyes sparkling with animation:

"You shall see, Ephraim, how I'll teach the little bird to speak," she cried.

The softening influence which had, during the last few months, come over his sister's nature was truly a matter of wonder to Ephraim. Humbly and submissively she accepted the slightest suggestion on his part, as though it were a command. He was to her a father and mother, and never were parents more implicitly obeyed by a child than this brother by a sister but three years his junior.

There was one subject, however, upon which Ephraim found his sister implacable and firm—their absent father, the mere mention of whose name made her tremble. Then there returned that haughty curl of the lips, and all the other symptoms of a proud, inflexible spirit. It was evident that Viola hated the man to whom she owed her existence.

Thus had it come about that Ephraim was almost afraid to pronounce his father's name. Neither did he care to allude to their mother before Viola, for the memory of her death was too closely bound up with that dark form behind the distant prison walls.

Let us now return to the night on which Ephraim opened the door to his father. How had it come about? A thousand times Ephraim had thought about his father's return—and now he durst not even kindle a light, to look upon the long-estranged face. As silent as when he had come, Ascher remained during the rest of the night; he had seated himself at the window, and his arm was resting upon the very spot where formerly the cage had stood. The bird had obtained its freedom, and was, no doubt, by this time asleep, nestling amid the breeze-swept foliage of some wooded glen. *He* too had regained his liberty, but no sleep closed his eyes, and yet he was in safe shelter, in the house of his children.

At length the day began to break. The sun was still hiding behind the mountain-tops, but its earliest rays were already reflected upon the window-panes. In the *Ghetto* footsteps became audible; here and there the grating noise of an opening street-door was heard, while from round the corner resounded, ever and anon, the hammer of the watchman, calling the people to morning service; for it was a Fast-day, which commenced at sunrise.

At that moment Ascher raised himself from his chair, and quickly turned away from the window. Ephraim was already by his side. "Father, dear father!" he cried from the in.

most depths of his heart, as he tried to grasp the hand of the convict.

"Don't make such a noise," said the latter, casting a furtive glance in the direction of the window, and speaking in the same mysterious whisper in which he had asked for admittance into the house.

What a strange awakening it was to his son, when, in the gray twilight of the breaking day, he looked at Ascher more closely. In his imagination Ephraim had pictured a wan, grief-worn figure, and now he saw before him a strong, well-built man, who certainly did not present the appearance of a person who had just emerged from the dank atmosphere of a prison! On the contrary, he seemed stronger and more vigorous than he had appeared in his best days.

"Has he had such a good time of it . . . ?" Ephraim felt compelled to ask himself . . . "how different our poor mother looked!"

With a violent effort he repressed the feelings which swelled his bosom. "Dear father," he said, with tears in his eyes, "make yourself quite comfortable; you have n't closed your eyes the whole night, you must be worn out. You are at home, remember . . . father!"

"It 's all right," said Ascher, with a deprecating gesture, "*we* fellows know other ways of spending the night."

"*We fellows!*" The words cut Ephraim to the heart.

"But you may be taken ill, father," he timidly observed.

"I taken ill! What do you take me for?" Ascher laughed, boisterously. "I have n't the slightest intention of falling ill."

At that moment the watchman was heard hammering at the door of the next house. The reverberating blows seemed to have a strangely disquieting effect upon the strong man; a violent tremor seized him; he cast one of the frightened glances which Ephraim had noticed before in the direction of the window, then with one bound he was at the door, and swiftly turned the knob.

"Father, what 's the matter?" Ephraim cried, much alarmed.

"Does the watchman look into the room when he passes by?" asked Ascher, while his eyes almost burst from their sockets, with the intentness of their gaze.

"Never," Ephraim assured him.

"Let me see, wait . . . " whispered Ascher.

The three well-known knocks now resounded upon their own door, then the shadow of a passing figure was thrown upon the opposite wall. With a sigh of relief, the words escaped Ascher's bosom:

"He did not look inside . . ." he muttered to himself.

Then he removed his hand from the door-knob, came back into the centre of the room, and approaching the table, rested his hand upon it.

"Ephraim . . ." he said after a while, in that suppressed tone which seemed to be peculiar to him, "are n't you going to synagogue?"

"No, father," replied Ephraim, "I 'm not going to-day."

"But they 'll want to know," Ascher observed, and at the words an ugly sneer curled the corners of his lip; "they 'll want to know who your guest is. Why don't you go and tell them?"

"Father!" cried Ephraim.

"Then be good enough to draw down the blinds. . . . What business is it of theirs who your guest is? Let them attend to their own affairs. . . . But they would n't be of 'the chosen race' if they did n't want to know what was taking place in the furthermost corner of your brain. You can't be too careful with them . . . you 're never secure against their far-scenting noses and their sharp, searching eyes."

It was now broad daylight. Ephraim drew down the blinds.

"The blinds are too white . . ." Ascher muttered, and moving a chair forward, he sat down upon it with his back to the window.

Ephraim proceeded to wind the phylacteries round his arm, and commenced to say his prayers softly.

His devotions over, he hurriedly took the phylacteries from his head and hand.

Ascher was still sitting immovable, his back to the window, his eyes fixed upon the door.

"Why don't you ask me where I 've left my luggage?" he suddenly cried.

"I 'll fetch it myself if you 'll tell me where it is," Ephraim remarked, in all simplicity.

"Upon my word, you make me laugh," cried Ascher, and a laugh like that of delirium burst from his lips. "All I can say, Ephraim, is, the most powerful giant upon earth would break his back beneath the weight of my luggage!"

Then only did Ephraim grasp his father's meaning.

"Don't worry yourself, father . . ." he said lovingly.

"Would you like to support me, perhaps!" Ascher shouted, with cutting disdain.

Ephraim's heart almost ceased to beat. Then movements were heard in the adjoining room.

"Have you any one with you?" cried Ascher, springing up. His sharp ears had instantly caught the sounds, and again the strong man was seized with violent trembling.

"Father, it 's only dear Viola," said Ephraim.

A nameless terror seemed to have over-powered Ascher. With one hand convulsively clenched upon the arm of the chair, and the other pressed to his temple, he sat breathing

heavily. Ephraim observed with alarm what a terrible change had come over his father's features during the last few seconds: his face had become ashen white, his eyes had lost their lustre, he seemed to have aged ten years.

The door opened, and Viola entered.

"Viola!" cried Ephraim, "here is our—"

"Welcome!" said the girl, in a low voice, as she approached a few steps nearer. She extended her hand towards him, but her eyes were cast down. She stood still for a moment, then, with a hurried movement, turned away.

"Gudule!" cried Ascher, horror-stricken, as he fell back almost senseless in his chair.

Was it the glamour of her maiden beauty that had so overpowered this unhappy father? Or was it the extraordinary resemblance she bore to the woman who had so loved him, and whose heart he had broken? The utterance of her name, the terror that accompanied the exclamation, denoted the effect which the girl's sudden appearance had produced upon that sadly unhinged mind.

"Viola!" Ephraim cried, in a sorrow-stricken voice, "why don't you come here?"

"I *can't*, Ephraim, I *can't* . . ." she moaned, as, with halting steps, she walked towards the door.

"Come, speak to him, do," Ephraim entreated, taking her hand in his.

"Let me go!" she cried, trying to release herself. . . . "I am thinking of mother!"

Suddenly Ascher rose.

"Where's my stick?" he cried. "I want the stick which I brought with me. . . . Where is it? I must go."

"Father, you won't . . ." cried Ephraim.

Then Viola turned round.

"Father," she said, with twitching lips . . . "you'll want something to eat before you go."

"Yes, yes, let me have something to eat," he shouted, as he brought his fist down upon the table. "Bring me wine . . . and let it be good . . . I am thirsty enough to drink the river dry. . . . Wine, and beer, and anything else you can find, bring all here, and then, when I've had my fill, I'll go."

"Go, Viola," Ephraim whispered in his sister's ear, "and bring him all he asks for."

When Viola had left the room, Ascher appeared to grow calmer. He sat down again leaning his arms upon the table.

"Yes," he muttered to himself: "I'll taste food with my children, before I take up my stick and go. . . . They say it's lucky to have the first drink of the day served by one's own child . . . and luck I *will* have again, at any price . . . What good children! While I've been anything but a good father to them, they run hither and

thither and take the trouble to get me food and drink, and I, I 've brought them home nothing but a wooden stick. But I 'll repay them, so help me God, I 'll make them rich yet, but I 've got nothing but a wooden stick, and I want money, no play without money, and no luck either. . . ."

Gradually a certain thoughtfulness overspread Ascher's agitated features, his lips were tightly compressed, deep furrows lined his forehead, while his eyes were fixed in a stony glare, as if upon some distant object. In the meantime Ephraim had remained standing almost motionless, and it was evident that his presence in the room had quite escaped his father's observation. With a chilling shudder running through his frame, his hair on end with horror, he listened to the strange soliloquy! . . . Then he saw his father's eyes travelling slowly in the direction of the old bureau in the corner, and there they remained fixed. "Why does he leave the key in the door, I wonder," he heard him mutter between his teeth, "just as Gudule used to do; I must tell him when he comes back, keys should n't be left in doors, never, under any circumstances." The entrance of Viola interrupted the old gambler's audible train of thought.

Ephraim gave a gasp of relief.

"Ah, what have you brought me?" cried Ascher, and his eyes sparkled with animation, as Viola produced some bottles from under her

apron, and placed them and some glasses upon the table.

"Now then, fill up the glass," he shouted, in a commanding voice, "and take care that you don't spill any, or you 'll spoil my luck."

With trembling hand Viola did as she was bidden, without spilling a single drop. Then he took up the glass and drained it at one draught. His face flushed a bright crimson: he poured himself out another glass.

"Are n't you drinking, Ephraim?" he exclaimed, after he had finished that glass also.

"I don't drink to-day, father," Ephraim faltered, "it 's a fast."

"A fast? What fast? I have been fasting too," he continued, with a coarse laugh, "twice a week, on bread and water; an excellent thing for the stomach. Fancy, a fast-day in midsummer. On such a long day, when the sun is up at three already, and at eight o'clock at night is still hesitating whether he 'll go to bed or not . . . what have I got to do with your Fast-day?"

His face grew redder every moment; he had drunk a third and a fourth glass, and there was nothing but a mere drain left in the bottle. Already his utterance was thick and incoherent, and his eyes were fast assuming that glassy brightness that is usually the forerunner of helpless intoxication. It was a sight Ephraim could not bear to see. Impelled by that natural, al-

most holy shame which prompted the son of Noah to cover the nakedness of his father, he motioned to his sister to leave. Then *he*, too, softly walked out of the room.

Outside, in the corridor, the brother and sister fell into each other's arms. Both wept bitterly: for a long time neither of them could find words in which to express the grief which filled their souls. At length Viola, her head resting upon Ephraim's shoulder, whispered: "Ephraim, what do you think of him?"

"He is ill, I think . . ." said Ephraim, in a voice choked with sobs.

"What, you call *that* illness, Ephraim?" Viola cried; "if that 's illness, then a wild beast is ill too."

"Viola, for Heaven's sake, be quiet: he 's our own father after all!"

"Ephraim!" said the girl, with a violent outburst of emotion, as she again threw herself into her brother's arms . . . "just think if mother had lived to see this!"

"Don't, don't, Viola, my sweet!" Ephraim exclaimed, sobbing convulsively.

"Ephraim!" the girl cried, shaking her head in wild despair, "I don 't believe in the *Sechûs!* When we live to see all this, and our hearts do not break, we lose faith in everything. . . . Ephraim, what is to become of us?"

"Hush, dear Viola, hush, you don't know

what you are saying," replied Ephraim, "I believe in it, because mother herself told us . . . you must believe in it too."

But Viola again shook her head. "I don't believe in it any longer," she moaned, "I can't."

Noiselessly, Ephraim walked toward the door of the front room; he placed his ear against the keyhole, and listened. Within all was silent. A fresh terror seized him. Why was no sound to be heard? . . . He opened the door cautiously lest it should creak. There sat his father asleep in the arm-chair, his head bent on his bosom, his arms hanging limp by his side.

"Hush, Viola," he whispered, closing the door as cautiously as he had opened it, "he is asleep. . . . I think it will do him good. Be careful that you make no noise."

Viola had seated herself upon a block of wood outside the kitchen door, and was sobbing silently. In the meantime, Ephraim, unable to find a word of solace for his sister, went and stood at the street door, so that no unbidden guest should come to disturb his father's slumbers. It was mid-day; from the church hard by streamed the peasants and their wives in their Sunday attire, and many bestowed a friendly smile upon the well-known youth. But he could only nod his head in return, his heart was sore oppressed, and a smile at such a moment seemed to him

nothing short of sin. He went back into the house, and listened at the door of the room. Silence still reigned unbroken, and with noiseless steps he again walked away.

"He is still sleeping," he whispered to his sister. "Just think what would have happened if we had still had that bird. . . . He would n't have been able to sleep a wink."

"Ephraim, why do you remind me of it?" cried Viola with a fresh outburst of tears. "Where is the little bird now, I wonder? . . ."

Ephraim sat down beside his sister, and took her hand in his. Thus they remained seated for some time, unable to find a word of comfort for each other.

At length movements were heard. Ephraim sprang to his feet and once more approached the door to listen.

"He is awake!" he softly said to Viola, and slowly opening the door, he entered the room.

Ascher was walking up and down with heavy tread.

"Do you feel refreshed after your sleep, father?" Ephraim asked timidly.

Ascher stood still, and confronted his son. His face was still very flushed, but his eyes had lost their glassy stare; his glance was clear and steady.

"Ephraim, my son," he began, in a kindly, al-

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most cheerful tone, "you 've grown into a splendid business man, as good a business man as one can meet with between this and Vienna. I 'm sure of it. But I must give you one bit of advice; it 's worth a hundred pounds to one in your position. Never leave a key in the lock of a bureau!"

Ephraim looked at his father as though stupefied. Was the man mad or delirious to talk in such a strain? At that moment, from the extreme end of the *Ghetto*, there sounded the three knocks, summoning the people to evening prayer. As in the morning, so again now the sound seemed to stun the vigorous man. His face blanched and assumed an expression of terror; he trembled from head to foot. Then again he cast a frightened glance in the direction of the window.

"Nothing but knocking, knocking!" he muttered. "They would like to knock the most hidden thoughts out of one's brains, if they only could. What makes them do it, I should like to know? . . . To the clanging of a bell you can, at all events, shut your ears, you need only place your hands to them . . . but with that hammer they bang at every confounded door, and drive one crazy. Who gives them the right to do it, I should like to know?" He stood still listening.

"Do you think he will be long before he

reaches here?" he asked Ephraim, in a frightened voice.

"Who, father?"

"The watch."

"He has already knocked next door but one."

Another minute, and the three strokes sounded on the door of the house. Ascher heaved a sigh of relief; he rubbed his hand across his forehead; it was wet with perspiration.

"Thank God!" he cried, as though addressing himself, "that 's over, and won't come again till to-morrow."

"Ephraim, my son!" he cried, with a sudden outburst of cheerfulness, accompanying the words with a thundering bang upon the table, "Ephraim, my son, you shall soon see what sort of a father you have. Now, you 're continually worrying your brains, walking your feet off, trying to get a skin, or praying some fool of a peasant to be good enough to sell you a bit of wool. Ephraim, my son, all that shall soon be changed, take my word for it. I 'll make you rich, and as for Viola, I 'll get her a husband—such a husband that all the girls in Bohemia will turn green and yellow with envy. . . . Ascher's daughter shall have as rich a dowry as the daughter of a Rothschild. . . . But there 's one thing, and one thing only, that I need, and then all will happen as I promise, in one night."

"And what is that, father!" asked Ephraim, with a slight shudder.

"Luck, luck, Ephraim, my son!" he shouted. "What is a man without luck? Put a man who has no luck in a chest full of gold; cover him with gold from head to foot; when he crawls out of it, and you search his pockets, you 'll find the gold has turned to copper."

"And will you have luck, father?" asked Ephraim.

"Ephraim, my son!" said the old gambler, with a cunning smile, "I 'll tell you something. There are persons whose whole powers are devoted to one object—how to win a fortune; in the same way as there are some who study to become doctors, and the like, so these study what we call luck . . . and from them I 've learned it."

He checked himself in sudden alarm lest he might have said too much, and looked searchingly at his son. A pure soul shone through Ephraim's open countenance, and showed his father that his real meaning had not been grasped.

"Never mind," he shouted loudly, waving his arms in the air, "what is to come no man can stop. Give me something to drink, Ephraim."

"Father," the latter faltered, "don't you think it will harm you?"

"Don't be a fool, Ephraim!" cried Ascher, "you don't know my constitution. Besides,

did n't you say that to-day was a fast, when it is forbidden to eat anything? And have I asked you for any food? But as for drink, that 's quite another thing! The birds of the air can't do without it, much less man!"

Ephraim saw that for that evening, at all events, it would not do to oppose his father. He walked into the kitchen where Viola was preparing supper, or rather breakfast, for after the fast this was the first meal of the day.

"Viola," he said, "make haste and fetch some fresh wine."

"For him?" cried Viola, pointing her finger almost threateningly in the direction of the sitting-room door.

"Don't, don't, Viola!" Ephraim implored.

"And you are fasting!" she said.

"Am I not also fasting for him?" said Ephraim.

With a full bottle in his hand Ephraim once more entered the room. He placed the wine upon the table, where the glasses from which Ascher had drunk in the morning were still standing.

"Where is Viola?" asked Ascher, who was again pacing the room with firm steps.

"She is busy cooking."

"Tell her she shall have a husband, and a dowry that will make half the girls in Bohemia turn green and yellow with envy."

Then he approached the table, and drank three

brimming glasses, one after the other. "Now then," he said, as with his whole weight he dropped into the old arm-chair. . . . "Now I 'll have a good night's rest. I need strength and sharp eyes, and they are things which only sleep can give. Ephraim, my son," he continued after a while in thick, halting accents . . . "tell the watch—Simon is his name, I think—he can give six knocks instead of three upon the door, in the morning, he won't disturb me . . . and to Viola you can say I 'll find her a husband, handsomer than her eyes have ever beheld, and tell her on her wedding-day she shall wear pearls round her neck like those of a queen—no, no, like those of Gudule, her mother." A few moments later he was sound asleep.

It was the dead of night. All round reigned stillness and peace, the peace of night! What a gentle sound those words convey, a sound akin only to the word *home!* Fraught, like it, with sweetest balm, a fragrant flower from long-lost paradise. Thou art at rest, Ascher, and in safe shelter; the breathing of thy children is so restful, so tranquil. . . .

Desist! desist! 'T is too late. Side by side with the peace of night, there dwell Spirits of Evil, the never-resting, vagrant, home-destroying guests, who enter unbidden into the human soul! Hark, the rustling of their raven-hued plumage! They take wing, they fly aloft; 't is the shriek of

the vulture, swooping down upon the guileless dove.

Is there no eye to watch thee? Doth not thine own kin see thy foul deeds?

Desist!

'T is too late. . . .

Open is the window, no grating noise has accompanied the unbolting of the shutter. . . . The evil spirits have taken care that the faintest sound shall die away . . . even the rough iron obeys their voices . . . it is they who have bidden: "Be silent; betray him not; he is one of us."

Even the key in the door of the old bureau is turned lightly and without noise. Groping fingers are searching for a bulky volume. Have they found it? Is there none there to cry in a voice of thunder: "Cursed be the father who stretches forth his desecrating hand towards the things that are his children's"? . . .

They *have* found it, the greedy fingers! and now, but a spring through the open window, and out into the night. . . .

At that moment a sudden ray of light shines through a crack in the door of the room. . . . Swiftly the door opens, a girlish figure appears on the threshold, a lighted lamp in her hand. . . .

"Gudule!" he shrieks, horror-stricken, and falls senseless at her feet.

Ascher was saved. The terrible blow which

had struck him down had not crushed the life from him. He was awakened. But when, after four weeks of gruesome fever and delirium, his mind had somewhat regained its equilibrium, his hair had turned white as snow, and his children beheld an old, decrepit man.

That which Viola had denied her father when he returned to them in all the vigor of his manhood, she now lavished upon him in his suffering and helplessness, with that concentrated power of love, the source of which is not human, but Divine. In the space of one night of terror, the merest bud of yesterday had suddenly blossomed forth into a flower of rarest beauty. Never did gentler hands cool a fever-heated brow, never did sweeter voice mingle its melody with the gruesome dreams of delirium.

On his sick-bed, lovingly tended by Ephraim and Viola, an ennobling influence gradually came over the heart of the old gambler, and so deeply touched it, that calm peace crowned his closing days. It was strange that the events of that memorable night, and the vicissitudes that had preceded it, had left no recollection behind, and his children took good care not to re-awaken, by the slightest hint, his sleeping memory.

A carriage drew up one day in front of Ascher's house. There has evidently been a splendid crop of oats this year. Uncle Gabriel

has come. Uncle Gabriel has only lately assumed the additional character of father-in-law to Ephraim, for he declared that none but Ephraim should be his pet daughter's husband. And now he has come for the purpose of having a confidential chat with Viola. There he sits, the kind-hearted, simple-minded man, every line of his honest face eloquent with good-humor and happiness, still guilty of an occasional violent onslaught upon his thighs. Viola still remains his "little spit-fire."

"Now, Viola, my little spit-fire," said he, "won't you yet allow me to talk to my Nathan about you? Upon my word, the boy can't bear the suspense any longer."

"Uncle," says Viola, and a crimson blush dyes her pale cheeks: "Uncle," she repeats, in a tone of such deep earnestness, that the laughing expression upon Gabriel's face instantly vanishes, "please don't talk to him at all. *My* place is with my father!"

And to all appearances Viola will keep her word.

Had she taken upon herself a voluntary penance for having, in her heart's bitter despair, presumed to abjure her faith in the *Sechûs* of her mother? Or was there yet another reason? The heart of woman is a strangely sensitive thing. It loves not to build its happiness upon the hidden ruins of another's life.

THE SEVERED HAND

BY

WILHELM HAUFF

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I WAS born in Constantinople ; my father was a dragoman at the Porte, and besides, carried on a fairly lucrative business in sweet-scented perfumes and silk goods. He gave me a good education; he partly instructed me himself, and also had me instructed by one of our priests. He at first intended me to succeed him in business one day, but as I showed greater aptitude than he had expected, he destined me, on the advice of his friends, to be a doctor; for if a doctor has learned a little more than the ordinary charlatan, he can make his fortune in Constantinople. Many Franks frequented our house, and one of them persuaded my father to allow me to travel to his native land to the city of Paris, where such things could be best acquired and free of charge. He wished, however, to take me with himself gratuitously on his journey home. My father, who had also travelled in his youth, agreed, and the Frank told me to hold myself in readiness three months hence. I was beside myself with

joy at the idea of seeing foreign countries, and eagerly awaited the moment when we should embark. The Frank had at last concluded his business and prepared himself for the journey. On the evening before our departure my father led me into his little bedroom. There I saw splendid dresses and arms lying on the table. My looks were however chiefly attracted to an immense heap of gold, for I had never before seen so much collected together.

My father embraced me and said: "Behold, my son, I have procured for thee clothes for the journey. These weapons are thine; they are the same which thy grandfather hung around me when I went abroad. I know that thou canst use them aright; but only make use of them when thou art attacked; on such occasions, however, defend thyself bravely. My property is not large; behold I have divided it into three parts, one part for thee, another for my support and spare money, but the third is to me a sacred and untouched property, it is for thee in the hour of need." Thus spoke my old father, tears standing in his eyes, perhaps from some foreboding, for I never saw him again.

The journey passed off very well; we had soon reached the land of the Franks, and six days later we arrived in the large city of Paris. There my Frankish friend hired a room for me, and advised me to spend wisely my money, which

amounted in all to two thousand dollars. I lived three years in this city, and learned what is necessary for a skilful doctor to know. I should not, however, be stating the truth if I said that I liked being there, for the customs of this nation displeased me; besides, I had only a few chosen friends there, and these were noble young men.

The longing after home at last possessed me mightily; during the whole of that time I had not heard anything from my father, and I therefore seized a favorable opportunity of reaching home. An embassy from France left for Turkey. I acted as surgeon to the suite of the Ambassador and arrived happily in Stamboul. My father's house was locked, and the neighbors, who were surprised on seeing me, told me my father had died two months ago. The priest who had instructed me in my youth brought me the key; alone and desolate I entered the empty house. All was still in the same position as my father had left it, only the gold which I was to inherit was gone. I questioned the priest about it, and he, bowing, said: "Your father died a saint, for he has bequeathed his gold to the Church." This was and remained inexplicable to me. However, what could I do? I had no witness against the priest, and had to be glad that he had not considered the house and the goods of my father as a bequest. This was the first misfortune that I encountered. Henceforth nothing but ill-luck

attended me. My reputation as doctor would not spread at all, because I was ashamed to act the charlatan ; and I felt everywhere the want of the recommendation of my father, who would have introduced me to the richest and most distinguished, but who now no longer thought of the poor Zaleukos ! The goods of my father also had no sale, for his customers had deserted him after his death, and new ones are only to be got slowly.

Thus when I was one day meditating sadly over my position, it occurred to me that I had often seen in France men of my nation travelling through the country exhibiting their goods in the markets of the towns. I remembered that the people liked to buy of them, because they came from abroad, and that such a business would be most lucrative. Immediately I resolved what to do. I disposed of my father's house, gave part of the money to a trusty friend to keep for me, and with the rest I bought what are very rare in France, shawls, silk goods, ointments, and oils, took a berth on board a ship, and thus entered upon my second journey to the land of the Franks. It seemed as if fortune had favored me again as soon as I had turned my back upon the Castles of the Dardanelles. Our journey was short and successful. I travelled through the large and small towns of the Franks, and found everywhere willing buyers of my goods. My friend in Stam-

boul always sent me fresh stores, and my wealth increased day by day. When I had saved at last so much that I thought I might venture on a greater undertaking, I travelled with my goods to Italy. I must however confess to something, which brought me not a little money: I also employed my knowledge of physic. On reaching a town, I had it published that a Greek physician had arrived, who had already healed many; and in fact my balsam and medicine gained me many a sequin. Thus I had at length reached the city of Florence in Italy.

I resolved upon remaining in this town for some time, partly because I liked it so well, partly also because I wished to recruit myself from the exertions of my travels. I hired a vaulted shop, in that part of the town called Sta. Croce, and not far from this a couple of nice rooms at an inn, leading out upon a balcony. I immediately had my bills circulated, which announced me to be both physician and merchant. Scarcely had I opened my shop when I was besieged by buyers, and in spite of my high prices I sold more than any one else, because I was obliging and friendly towards my customers. Thus I had already lived four days happily in Florence, when one evening, as I was about to close my vaulted room, and on examining once more the contents of my ointment boxes, as I was in the habit of doing, I found in one of the small

boxes a piece of paper, which I did not remember to have put into it.

I unfolded the paper, and found in it an invitation to be on the bridge which is called Ponto Vecchio that night exactly at midnight. I was thinking for a long time as to who it might be who had invited me there; and not knowing a single soul in Florence, I thought perhaps I should be secretly conducted to a patient, a thing which had already often occurred. I therefore determined to proceed thither, but took care to gird on the sword which my father had once presented to me. When it was close upon midnight I set out on my journey, and soon reached the Ponte Vecchio. I found the bridge deserted, and determined to await the appearance of him who called me. It was a cold night; the moon shone brightly, and I looked down upon the waves of the Arno, which sparkled far away in the moonlight. It was now striking twelve o'clock from all the churches of the city, when I looked up and saw a tall man standing before me completely covered in a scarlet cloak, one end of which hid his face.

At first I was somewhat frightened, because he had made his appearance so suddenly; but was however myself again shortly afterwards, and said: "If it is you who have ordered me here, say what you want?" The man dressed in scarlet turned round and said in an undertone:

"Follow!" At this, however, I felt a little timid to go alone with this stranger. I stood still and said: "Not so, sir, kindly first tell me where; you might also let me see your countenance a little, in order to convince me that you wish me no harm." The red one, however, did not seem to pay any attention to this. "If thou art unwilling, Zaleukos, remain," he replied, and continued his way. I grew angry. "Do you think," I exclaimed, "a man like myself allows himself to be made a fool of, and to have waited on this cold night for nothing?"

In three bounds I had reached him, seized him by his cloak, and cried still louder, whilst laying hold of my sabre with my other hand. His cloak, however, remained in my hand, and the stranger had disappeared round the nearest corner. I became calmer by degrees. I had the cloak at any rate, and it was this which would give me the key to this remarkable adventure. I put it on and continued my way home. When I was at a distance of about a hundred paces from it, some one brushed very closely by me and whispered in the language of the Franks: "Take care, Count, nothing can be done to-night." Before I had time, however, to turn round, this somebody had passed, and I merely saw a shadow hovering along the houses. I perceived that these words did not concern me, but rather the cloak, yet it gave me no explanation concerning

the affair. On the following morning I considered what was to be done. At first I had intended to have the cloak cried in the streets, as if I had found it. But then the stranger might send for it by a third person, and thus no light would be thrown upon the matter. Whilst I was thus thinking, I examined the cloak more closely. It was made of thick Genoese velvet, scarlet in color, edged with Astrachan fur and richly embroidered with gold. The magnificent appearance of the cloak put a thought into my mind which I resolved to carry out.

I carried it into my shop and exposed it for sale, but placed such a high price upon it that I was sure nobody would buy it. My object in this was to scrutinize everybody sharply who might ask for the fur cloak; for the figure of the stranger, which I had seen but superficially, though with some certainty, after the loss of the cloak, I should recognize amongst a thousand. There were many would-be purchasers for the cloak, the extraordinary beauty of which attracted everybody; but none resembled the stranger in the slightest degree, and nobody was willing to pay such a high price as two hundred sequins for it. What astonished me was that on asking somebody or other if there was not such a cloak in Florence, they all answered "No," and assured me they never had seen so precious and tasteful a piece of work.

Evening was drawing near, when at last a young man appeared, who had already been to my place, and who had also offered me a great deal for the cloak. He threw a purse with sequins upon the table, and exclaimed: "Of a truth, Zaleukos, I must have thy cloak, should I turn into a beggar over it!" He immediately began to count his pieces of gold. I was in a dangerous position: I had only exposed the cloak, in order merely to attract the attention of my stranger, and now a young fool came to pay an immense price for it. However, what could I do? I yielded; for on the other hand I was delighted at the idea of being so handsomely recompensed for my nocturnal adventure.

The young man put the cloak around him and went away, but on reaching the threshold he returned; whilst unfastening a piece of paper which had been tied to the cloak, and throwing it towards me, he exclaimed: "Here, Zaleukos, hangs something which I dare say does not belong to the cloak." I picked up the piece of paper carelessly, but behold, on it these words were written: "Bring the cloak at the appointed hour to-night to the Ponte Vecchio, four hundred sequins are thine." I stood thunderstruck. Thus I had lost my fortune and completely missed my aim! Yet I did not think long. I picked up the two hundred sequins, jumped after the one who had bought the cloak, and said: "Dear

friend, take back your sequins, and give me the cloak; I cannot possibly part with it." He first regarded the matter as a joke; but when he saw that I was in earnest, he became angry at my demand, called me a fool, and finally it came to blows.

However, I was fortunate enough to wrench the cloak from him in the scuffle, and was about to run away with it, when the young man called the police to his assistance, and we both appeared before the judge. The latter was much surprised at the accusation, and adjudicated the cloak in favor of my adversary. I offered the young man twenty, fifty, eighty, even a hundred sequins in addition to his two hundred, if he would part with the cloak. What my entreaties could not do, my gold did. He accepted it. I, however, went away with the cloak triumphantly, and had to appear to the whole town of Florence as a madman. I did not care, however, about the opinion of the people; I knew better than they that I profited after all by the bargain.

Impatiently I awaited the night. At the same hour as before I went with the cloak under my arm towards the Ponte Vecchio. With the last stroke of twelve the figure appeared out of the darkness, and came towards me. It was unmistakably the man whom I had seen yesterday. "Hast thou the cloak?" he asked me. "Yes, sir," I replied; "but it cost me a hundred sequins

ready money." "I know it," replied the other. "Look here, here are four hundred." He went with me towards the wide balustrade of the bridge, and counted out the money. There were four hundred; they sparkled magnificently in the moonlight; their glitter rejoiced my heart. Alas, I did not anticipate that this would be its last joy. I put the money into my pocket, and was desirous of thoroughly looking at my kind and unknown stranger; but he wore a mask, through which dark eyes stared at me frightfully. "I thank you, sir, for your kindness," I said to him; "what else do you require of me? I tell you beforehand it must be an honorable transaction." "There is no occasion for alarm," he replied, whilst winding the cloak around his shoulders; "I require your assistance as surgeon, not for one alive, but dead."

"What do you mean?" I exclaimed, full of surprise. "I arrived with my sister from abroad," he said, and beckoned me at the same time to follow him. "I lived here with her at the house of a friend. My sister died yesterday suddenly of a disease, and my relatives wish to bury her to-morrow. According to an old custom of our family all are to be buried in the tomb of our ancestors; many, notwithstanding, who died in foreign countries are buried there and embalmed. I do not grudge my relatives her body, but for my father I want at least the head of his

daughter, in order that he may see her once more." This custom of severing the heads of beloved relatives appeared to me somewhat awful, yet I did not dare to object to it lest I should offend the stranger. I told him that I was acquainted with the embalming of the dead, and begged him to conduct me to the deceased. Yet I could not help asking him why all this must be done so mysteriously and at night? He answered me that his relatives, who considered his intention horrible, objected to it by daylight; if only the head were severed, then they could say no more about it; although he might have brought me the head, yet a natural feeling had prevented him from severing it himself.

In the meantime we had reached a large, splendid house. My companion pointed it out to me as the end of our nocturnal walk. We passed the principal entrance of the house, entered a little door, which the stranger carefully locked behind him, and now ascended in the dark a narrow spiral staircase. It led towards a dimly lighted passage, out of which we entered a room lighted by a lamp fastened to the ceiling.

In this room was a bed, on which the corpse lay. The stranger turned aside his face, evidently endeavoring to hide his tears. He pointed towards the bed, telling me to do my business well and quickly, and left the room.

I took my instruments, which I as surgeon always carried about with me, and approached the bed. Only the head of the corpse was visible, and it was so beautiful that I experienced involuntarily the deepest sympathy. Dark hair hung down in long plaits, the features were pale, the eyes closed. At first I made an incision into the skin, after the manner of surgeons when amputating a limb. I then took my sharpest knife, and with one stroke cut the throat. But oh, horror! The dead opened her eyes, but immediately closed them again, and with a deep sigh she now seemed to breathe her last. At the same moment a stream of hot blood shot towards me from the wound. I was convinced that the poor creature had been killed by me. That she was dead there was no doubt, for there was no recovery from this wound. I stood for some minutes in painful anguish at what had happened. Had the "red-cloak" deceived me, or had his sister perhaps merely been apparently dead? The latter seemed to me more likely. But I dare not tell the brother of the deceased that perhaps a little less deliberate cut might have awakened her without killing her; therefore I wished to sever the head completely; but once more the dying woman groaned, stretched herself out in painful movements, and died.

Fright overpowered me, and, shuddering, I hastened out of the room. But outside in the

passage it was dark; for the light was out, no trace of my companion was to be seen, and I was obliged, haphazard, to feel my way in the dark along the wall, in order to reach the staircase. I discovered it at last and descended, partly falling and partly gliding. But there was not a soul downstairs. I merely found the door ajar, and breathed freer on reaching the street, for I had felt very strange inside the house. Urged on by terror, I rushed towards my dwelling-place, and buried myself in the cushions of my bed, in order to forget the terrible thing that I had done.

But sleep deserted me, and only the morning admonished me again to take courage. It seemed to me probable that the man who had induced me to commit this nefarious deed, as it now appeared to me, might not denounce me. I immediately resolved to set to work in my vaulted room, and if possible to assume an indifferent look. But alas! an additional circumstance, which I only now noticed, increased my anxiety still more. My cap and my girdle, as well as my instruments, were wanting, and I was uncertain as to whether I had left them in the room of the murdered girl, or whether I had lost them in my flight. The former seemed indeed the more likely, and thus I could easily be discovered as the murderer.

At the accustomed hour I opened my vaulted

room. My neighbor came in, as was his wont every morning, for he was a talkative man. "Well," he said, "what do you say about the terrible affair which has occurred during the night?" I pretended not to know anything. "What, do you not know what is known all over the town? Are you not aware that the loveliest flower in Florence, Bianca, the Governor's daughter, was murdered last night? I saw her only yesterday driving through the streets in so cheerful a manner with her intended one, for to-day the marriage was to have taken place." I felt deeply wounded at each word of my neighbor. Many a time my torment was renewed, for every one of my customers told me of the affair, each one more ghastly than the other, and yet nobody could relate anything more terrible than that which I had seen myself.

About mid-day a police-officer entered my shop and requested me to send the people away. "Signor Zaleukos," he said, producing the things which I had missed, "do these things belong to you?" I was thinking as to whether I should not entirely repudiate them, but on seeing through the door, which stood ajar, my landlord and several acquaintances, I determined not to aggravate the affair by telling a lie, and acknowledged myself as the owner of the things. The police-officer asked me to follow him, and led me towards a large building which I soon recognized

as the prison. There he showed me into a room meanwhile.

My situation was terrible, as I thought of it in my solitude. The idea of having committed a murder, unintentionally, constantly presented itself to my mind. I also could not conceal from myself that the glitter of the gold had captivated my feelings, otherwise I should not have fallen blindly into the trap. Two hours after my arrest I was led out of my cell. I descended several steps until at last I reached a great hall. Around a long table draped in black were seated twelve men, mostly old men. There were benches along the sides of the hall, filled with the most distinguished of Florence. The galleries, which were above, were thickly crowded with spectators. When I had stepped towards the table covered with black cloth, a man with a gloomy and sad countenance rose; it was the Governor. He said to the assembly that he as the father in this affair could not sentence, and that he resigned his place on this occasion to the eldest of the Senators. The eldest of the Senators was an old man at least ninety years of age. He stood in a bent attitude, and his temples were covered with thin white hair, but his eyes were as yet very fiery, and his voice powerful and weighty. He commenced by asking me whether I confessed to the murder. I requested him to allow me to speak, and related undauntedly and with

a clear voice what I had done, and what I knew.

I noticed that the Governor, during my recital, at one time turned pale, and at another time red. When I had finished, he rose angrily: "What, wretch!" he exclaimed, "dost thou even dare to impute a crime which thou hast committed from greediness to another?" The Senator reprimanded him for his interruption, since he had voluntarily renounced his right; besides it was not clear that I did the deed from greediness, for, according to his own statement, nothing had been stolen from the victim. He even went further. He told the Governor that he must give an account of the early life of his daughter, for then only it would be possible to decide whether I had spoken the truth or not. At the same time he adjourned the court for the day, in order, as he said, to consult the papers of the deceased, which the Governor would give him. I was again taken back to my prison, where I spent a wretched day, always fervently wishing that a link between the deceased and the "red-cloak" might be discovered. Full of hope, I entered the Court of Justice the next day. Several letters were lying upon the table. The old Senator asked me whether they were in my handwriting. I looked at them and noticed that they must have been written by the same hand as the other two papers which I had received. I com-

municated this to the Senators, but no attention was paid to it, and they told me that I might have written both, for the signature of the letters was undoubtedly a Z., the first letter of my name. The letters, however, contained threats against the deceased, and warnings against the marriage which she was about to contract.

The Governor seemed to have given extraordinary information concerning me, for I was treated with more suspicion and rigor on this day. I referred, to justify myself, to my papers which must be in my room, but was told they had been looked for without success. Thus at the conclusion of this sitting all hope vanished, and on being brought into the Court the third day, judgment was pronounced on me. I was convicted of wilful murder and condemned to death. Things had come to such a pass! Deserted by all that was precious to me upon earth, far away from home, I was to die innocently in the bloom of my life.

On the evening of this terrible day which had decided my fate, I was sitting in my lonely cell, my hopes were gone, my thoughts steadfastly fixed upon death, when the door of my prison opened, and in came a man, who for a long time looked at me silently. "Is it thus I find you again, Zaleukos?" he said. I had not recognized him by the dim light of my lamp, but the sound of his voice roused in me old remem-

brances. It was Valetti, one of those few friends whose acquaintance I made in the city of Paris when I was studying there. He said that he had come to Florence accidentally, where his father, who was a distinguished man, lived. He had heard about my affair, and had come to see me once more, and to hear from my own lips how I could have committed such a crime. I related to him the whole affair. He seemed much surprised at it, and adjured me, as my only friend, to tell him all, in order not to leave the world with a lie behind me. I confirmed my assertions with an oath that I had spoken the truth, and that I was not guilty of anything, except that the glitter of the gold had dazzled me, and that I had not perceived the improbability of the story of the stranger. "Did you not know Bianca?" he asked me. I assured him that I had never seen her. Valetti now related to me that a profound mystery rested on the affair, that the Governor had very much accelerated my condemnation, and now a report was spread that I had known Bianca for a long time, and had murdered her out of revenge for her marriage with some one else. I told him that all this coincided exactly with the "red-cloak," but that I was unable to prove his participation in the affair. Valetti embraced me weeping, and promised me to do all, at least to save my life.

I had little hope, though I knew that Valetti

was a clever man, well versed in the law, and that he would do all in his power to save my life. For two long days I was in uncertainty; at last Valetti appeared. "I bring consolation, though painful. You will live and be free with the loss of one hand." Affected, I thanked my friend for saving my life. He told me that the Governor had been inexorable in having the affair investigated a second time, but that he at last, in order not to appear unjust, had agreed, that if a similar case could be found in the law books of the history of Florence, my punishment should be the same as the one recorded in these books. He and his father had searched in the old books day and night, and at last found a case quite similar to mine. The sentence was: That his left hand be cut off, his property confiscated, and he himself banished for ever. This was my punishment also, and he asked me to prepare for the painful hour which awaited me. I will not describe to you that terrible hour, when I laid my hand upon the block in the public market-place and my own blood shot over me in broad streams.

Valetti took me to his house until I had recovered; he then most generously supplied me with money for travelling, for all I had acquired with so much difficulty had fallen a prey to the law. I left Florence for Sicily and embarked on the first ship that I found for Constantinople.

My hope was fixed upon the sum which I had entrusted to my friend. I also requested to be allowed to live with him. But how great was my astonishment on being asked why I did not wish to live in my own house. He told me that some unknown man had bought a house in the Greek Quarter in my name, and this very man had also told the neighbors of my early arrival. I immediately proceeded thither accompanied by my friend, and was received by all my old acquaintances joyfully. An old merchant gave me a letter, which the man who had bought the house for me had left behind. I read as follows: "Zaleukos! Two hands are prepared to work incessantly, in order that you may not feel the loss of one of yours. The house which you see and all its contents are yours, and every year you will receive enough to be counted amongst the rich of your people. Forgive him who is unhappier than yourself!" I could guess who had written it, and in answer to my question, the merchant told me it had been a man, whom he took for a Frank, and who had worn a scarlet cloak. I knew enough to understand that the stranger was, after all, not entirely devoid of noble intentions. In my new house I found everything arranged in the best style, also a vaulted room stored with goods, more splendid than I had ever had. Ten years have passed since. I still continue my commercial travels, more from old cus-

tom than necessity, yet I have never again seen that country where I became so unfortunate. Every year since, I have received a thousand gold-pieces; and although I rejoice to know that unfortunate man to be noble, yet he cannot relieve me of the sorrow of my soul, for the terrible picture of the murdered Bianca is continually on my mind.

PETER SCHLEMIHL

BY

ADELBERT VON CHAMISSO

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THE SHADOWLESS MAN

BY ADELBERT VON CHAMISSO

CHAPTER I.

AFTER a prosperous, but to me very wearisome, voyage, we came at last into port. Immediately on landing I got together my few effects ; and, squeezing myself through the crowd, went into the nearest and humblest inn which first met my gaze. On asking for a room the waiter looked at me from head to foot, and conducted me to one. I asked for some cold water, and for the correct address of Mr. Thomas John, which was described as being "by the north gate, the first country-house to the right, a large new house of red and white marble, with many pillars." This was enough. As the day was not yet far advanced, I untied my bundle, took out my newly-turned black coat, dressed myself in my best clothes, and, with my letter of recommendation, set out for the man who was to assist me in the attainment of my moderate wishes.

After proceeding up the north street, I reached

the gate, and saw the marble columns glittering through the trees. Having wiped the dust from my shoes with my pocket-handkerchief, and re-adjusted my cravat, I rang the bell—offering up at the same time a silent prayer. The door flew open, and the porter sent in my name. I had soon the honor to be invited into the park, where Mr. John was walking with a few friends. I recognized him at once by his corpulency and self-complacent air. He received me very well—just as a rich man receives a poor devil; and turning to me, took my letter. "Oh, from my brother! it is a long time since I heard from him: is he well?—Yonder," he went on,—turning to the company, and pointing to a distant hill—"yonder is the site of the new building." He broke the seal without discontinuing the conversation, which turned upon riches. "The man," he said, "who does not possess at least a million is a poor wretch." "Oh, how true!" I exclaimed, in the fulness of my heart. He seemed pleased at this, and replied with a smile: "Stop here, my dear friend; afterwards I shall, perhaps, have time to tell you what I think of this," pointing to the letter, which he then put into his pocket, and turned round to the company, offering his arm to a young lady: his example was followed by the other gentlemen, each politely escorting a lady; and the whole party proceeded towards a little hill thickly planted with blooming roses.

I followed without troubling any one, for none took the least further notice of me. The party was in high spirits—lounging about and jesting —speaking sometimes of trifling matters very seriously, and of serious matters as triflingly—and exercising their wit in particular to great advantage on their absent friends and their affairs. I was too ignorant of what they were talking about to understand much of it, and too anxious and absorbed in my own reflections to occupy myself with the solution of such enigmas as their conversation presented.

By this time we had reached the thicket of roses. The lovely Fanny, who seemed to be the queen of the day, was obstinately bent on plucking a rose-branch for herself, and in the attempt pricked her finger with a thorn. The crimson stream, as if flowing from the dark-tinted rose, tinged her fair hand with the purple current. This circumstance set the whole company in commotion; and court-plaster was called for. A quiet, elderly man, tall and meagre-looking, who was one of the company, but whom I had not before observed, immediately put his hand into the tight breast-pocket of his old-fashioned coat of gray sarcenet, pulled out a small letter-case, opened it, and, with a most respectful bow, presented the lady with the wished-for article. She received it without noticing the giver, or thanking him. The wound was bound up, and the

party proceeded along the hill towards the back part, from which they enjoyed an extensive view across the green labyrinth of the park to the wide-spreading ocean. The view was truly a magnificent one. A slight speck was observed on the horizon, between the dark flood and the azure sky. "A telescope!" called out Mr. John; but before any of the servants could answer the summons the gray man, with a modest bow, drew his hand from his pocket, and presented a beautiful Dollond's telescope to Mr. John, who, on looking through it, informed the company that the speck in the distance was the ship which had sailed yesterday, and which was detained within sight of the haven by contrary winds. The telescope passed from hand to hand, but was not returned to the owner, whom I gazed at with astonishment, and could not conceive how so large an instrument could have proceeded from so small a pocket. This, however, seemed to excite surprise in no one; and the gray man appeared to create as little interest as myself.

Refreshments were now brought forward, consisting of the rarest fruits from all parts of the world, served up in the most costly dishes. Mr. John did the honors with unaffected grace, and addressed me for the second time, saying, "You had better eat; you did not get such things at sea." I acknowledged his politeness with a bow, which, however, he did not perceive,

having tnrned round to speak with some one else.

The party would willingly have stopped some time here on the declivity of the hill, to enjoy the extensive prospect before them, had they not been apprehensive of the dampness of the grass. "How delightful it would be," exclaimed some one, "if we had a Turkey carpet to lay down here!" The wish was scarcely expressed when the man in the gray coat put his hand in his pocket, and, with a modest and even humble air, pulled out a rich Turkey carpet, embroidered in gold. The servant received it as a matter of course, and spread it out on the desired spot; and, without any ceremony, the company seated themselves on it. Confounded by what I saw, I gazed again at the man, his pocket, and the carpet, which was more than twenty feet in length and ten in breadth, and rubbed my eyes, not knowing what to think, particularly as no one saw anything extraordinary in the matter.

I would gladly have made some inquiries respecting the man, and asked who he was, but knew not to whom I should address myself, for I felt almost more afraid of the servants than of their master. At length I took courage, and stepping up to a young man who seemed of less consequence than the others, and who was more frequently standing by himself, I begged of him, in a low tone, to tell me who the obliging gentle-

man was in the gray cloak. "That man who looks like a piece of thread just escaped from a tailor's needle?" "Yes; he who is standing alone yonder." "I do not know," was the reply; and to avoid, as it seemed, any further conversation with me, he turned away, and spoke of some commonplace matters with a neighbor.

The sun's rays now being stronger, the ladies complained of feeling oppressed by the heat; and the lovely Fanny, turning carelessly to the gray man, to whom I had not yet observed that any one had addressed the most trifling question, asked him if, perhaps, he had not a tent about him. He replied, with a low bow, as if some unmerited honor had been conferred upon him; and, putting his hand in his pocket, drew from it canvas, poles, cord, iron—in short, everything belonging to the most splendid tent for a party of pleasure. The young gentlemen assisted in pitching it; and it covered the whole carpet; but no one seemed to think that there was anything extraordinary in it.

I had long secretly felt uneasy—indeed, almost horrified; but how was this feeling increased when, at the next wish expressed, I saw him take from his pocket three horses! Yes, Adelbert, three large beautiful steeds, with saddles and bridles, out of the very pocket whence had already issued a letter-case, a telescope, a carpet twenty feet broad and ten in length, and

a pavilion of the same extent, with all its appurtenances! Did I not assure thee that my own eyes had seen all this, thou wouldst certainly disbelieve it.

This man, although he appeared so humble and embarrassed in his air and manners, and passed so unheeded, had inspired me with such a feeling of horror by the unearthly paleness of his countenance, from which I could not avert my eyes, that I was unable longer to endure it.

I determined, therefore, to steal away from the company, which appeared no difficult matter, from the undistinguished part I acted in it. I resolved to return to the town, and pay another visit to Mr. John the following morning, and, at the same time, make some inquiries of him relative to the extraordinary man in gray, provided I could command sufficient courage. Would to Heaven that such good fortune had awaited me!

I had stolen safely down the hill, through the thicket of roses, and now found myself on an open plain; but fearing lest I should be met out of the proper path, crossing the grass, I cast an inquisitive glance around, and started as I beheld the man in the gray cloak advancing towards me. He took off his hat, and made me a lower bow than mortal had ever yet favored me with. It was evident that he wished to address me; and I could not avoid encountering him without seeming rude. I returned his salutation, there-

fore, and stood bareheaded in the sunshine as if rooted to the ground. I gazed at him with the utmost horror, and felt like a bird fascinated by a serpent.

He affected himself to have an air of embarrassment. With his eyes on the ground, he bowed several times, drew nearer, and at last, without looking up, addressed me in a low and hesitating voice, almost in the tone of a suppliant: "Will you, sir, excuse my importunity in venturing to intrude upon you in so unusual a manner? I have a request to make—would you most graciously be pleased to allow me—?" "Hold! for Heaven's sake!" I exclaimed; "what can I do for a man who—" I stopped in some confusion, which he seemed to share. After a moment's pause he resumed: "During the short time I have had the pleasure to be in your company, I have—permit me, sir, to say—beheld with unspeakable admiration your most beautiful shadow, and remarked the air of noble indifference with which you, at the same time, turn from the glorious picture at your feet, as if disdaining to vouchsafe a glance at it. Excuse the boldness of my proposal; but perhaps you would have no objection to sell me your shadow?" He stopped, while my head turned round like a mill-wheel. What was I to think of so extraordinary a proposal? To sell my shadow! "He must be mad," thought I; and assuming a tone more in char-

acter with the submissiveness of his own, I replied, "My good friend, are you not content with your own shadow? This would be a bargain of a strange nature indeed!"

"I have in my pocket," he said, "many things which may possess some value in your eyes: for that inestimable shadow I should deem the highest price too little."

A cold shuddering came over me as I recollected the pocket; and I could not conceive what had induced me to style him "*good friend*," which I took care not to repeat, endeavoring to make up for it by studied politeness.

I now resumed the conversation: "But, sir—excuse your humble servant—I am at a loss to comprehend your meaning,—my shadow?—how can I?"

"Permit me," he exclaimed, interrupting me, "to gather up the noble image as it lies on the ground, and to take it into my possession. As to the manner of accomplishing it, leave that to me. In return, and as an evidence of my gratitude, I shall leave you to choose among all the treasures I have in my pocket, among which are a variety of enchanting articles, not exactly adapted for you, who, I am sure, would like better to have the wishing-cap of Fortunatus, all made new and sound again, and a lucky purse which also belonged to him."

"Fortunatus's purse!" cried I; and, great as

was my mental anguish, with that one word he had penetrated the deepest recesses of my soul. A feeling of giddiness came over me, and double ducats glittered before my eyes.

"Be pleased, gracious sir, to examine this purse, and make a trial of its contents." He put his hand in his pocket, and drew forth a large strongly stitched bag of stout Cordovan leather, with a couple of strings to match, and presented it to me. I seized it—took out ten gold-pieces, then ten more, and this I repeated again and again. Instantly I held out my hand to him. "Done," said I; "the bargain is made: my shadow for the purse." "Agreed," he answered; and, immediately kneeling down, I beheld him, with extraordinary dexterity, gently loosen my shadow from the grass, lift it up, fold it together, and, at last, put it his pocket. He then rose, bowed once more to me, and directed his steps towards the rose bushes. I fancied I heard him quietly laughing to himself. However, I held the purse fast by the two strings. The earth was basking beneath the brightness of the sun; but I presently lost all consciousness.

On recovering my senses, I hastened to quit a place where I hoped there was nothing further to detain me. I first filled my pockets with gold, then fastened the strings of the purse round my neck, and concealed it in my bosom. I passed unnoticed out of the park, gained the high-road,

and took the way to the town. As I was thoughtfully approaching the gate, I heard some one behind me exclaiming: "Young man! young man! you have lost your shadow!" I turned, and perceived an old woman calling after me. "Thank you, my good woman," said I; and throwing her a piece of gold for her well-intended information, I stepped under the trees. At the gate, again, it was my fate to hear the sentry inquiring where the gentleman had left his shadow; and immediately I heard a couple of women exclaiming, "Jesu Maria! the poor man has no shadow." All this began to depress me, and I carefully avoided walking in the sun; but this could not everywhere be the case: for in the next broad street I had to cross, and, unfortunately for me, at the very hour in which the boys were coming out of school, a humpbacked lout of a fellow—I see him yet—soon made the discovery that I was without a shadow, and communicated the news, with loud outcries, to a knot of young urchins. The whole swarm proceeded immediately to reconnoitre me, and to pelt me with mud. "People," cried they, "are generally accustomed to take their shadows with them when they walk in the sunshine."

In order to drive them away I threw gold by handfuls among them, and sprang into a hackney-coach which some compassionate spectators sent to my rescue.

As soon as I found myself alone in the rolling vehicle I began to weep bitterly. I had by this time a misgiving that, in the same degree in which gold in this world prevails over merit and virtue, by so much one's shadow excels gold; and now that I had sacrificed my conscience for riches, and given my shadow in exchange for mere gold, what on earth would become of me?

As the coach stopped at the door of my late inn, I felt much perplexed, and not at all disposed to enter so wretched an abode. I called for my things, and received them with an air of contempt, threw down a few gold-pieces, and desired to be conducted to a first-rate hotel. This house had a northern aspect, so that I had nothing to fear from the sun. I dismissed the coachman with gold, asked to be conducted to the best apartment, and locked myself up in it as soon as possible.

Imagine, my friend, what I then set about? O my dear Chamisso! even to thee I blush to mention what follows.

I drew the ill-fated purse from my bosom; and, in a sort of frenzy that raged like a self-fed fire within me, I took out gold—gold—gold—more and more, till I strewed it on the floor, trampled upon it, and feasting on its very sound and brilliancy, added coins to coins, rolling and revelling on the gorgeous bed, until I sank exhausted.

Thus passed away that day and evening; and

as my door remained locked, night found me still lying on the gold, where, at last, sleep overpowered me.

Then I dreamed of thee, and fancied I stood behind the glass door of thy little room, and saw thee seated at thy table between a skeleton and a bunch of dried plants; before thee lay open the works of Haller, Humboldt, and Linnæus; on thy sofa a volume of Goethe, and the Enchanted Ring. I stood a long time contemplating thee, and everything in thy apartment; and again turning my gaze upon thee, I perceived that thou wast motionless—thou didst not breathe—thou wast dead.

I awoke—it seemed yet early—my watch had stopped. I felt thirsty, faint, and worn out; for since the preceding morning I had not tasted food. I now cast from me, with loathing and disgust, the very gold with which but a short time before I had satiated my foolish heart. Now I knew not where to put it—I dared not leave it lying there. I examined my purse to see if it would hold it,—impossible! Neither of my windows opened on the sea. I had no other resource but, with toil and great fatigue, to drag it to a huge chest which stood in a closet in my room; where I placed it all, with the exception of a handful or two. Then I threw myself, exhausted, into an arm-chair, till the people of the house should be up and stirring. As soon as possible I sent for

some refreshment, and desired to see the landlord.

I entered into some conversation with this man respecting the arrangement of my future establishment. He recommended for my personal attendant one Bendel, whose honest and intelligent countenance immediately prepossessed me in his favor. It is this individual whose persevering attachment has consoled me in all the miseries of my life, and enabled me to bear up under my wretched lot. I was occupied the whole day in my room with servants in want of a situation, and tradesmen of every description. I decided on my future plans, and purchased various articles of vertu and splendid jewels, in order to get rid of some of my gold; but nothing seemed to diminish the inexhaustible heap.

I now reflected on my situation with the utmost uneasiness. I dared not take a single step beyond my own door; and in the evening I had forty wax tapers lighted before I ventured to leave the shade. I reflected with horror on the frightful encounter with the schoolboys; yet I resolved, if I could command sufficient courage, to put the public opinion to a second trial. The nights were now moonlight. Late in the evening I wrapped myself in a large cloak, pulled my hat over my eyes, and, trembling like a criminal, stole out of the house.

I did not venture to leave the friendly shadow

of the houses until I had reached a distant part of the town; and then I emerged into the broad moonlight, fully prepared to hear my fate from the lips of the passers-by.

Spare me, my beloved friend, the painful recital of all that I was doomed to endure. The women often expressed the deepest sympathy for me—a sympathy not less piercing to my soul than the scoffs of the young people, and the proud contempt of the men, particularly of the more corpulent, who threw an ample shadow before them. A fair and beauteous maiden, apparently accompanied by her parents, who gravely kept looking straight before them, chanced to cast a beaming glance on me; but was evidently startled at perceiving that I was without a shadow, and hiding her lovely face in her veil, and holding down her head, passed silently on.

This was past all endurance. Tears streamed from my eyes; and with a heart pierced through and through, I once more took refuge in the shade. I leaned on the houses for support, and reached home at a late hour, worn out with fatigue.

I passed a sleepless night. My first care the following morning was to devise some means of discovering the man in the gray cloak. Perhaps I may succeed in finding him; and how fortunate it were if he should be as ill satisfied with his bargain as I am with mine!

I desired Bendel to be sent for, who seemed to possess some tact and ability. I minutely described to him the individual who possessed a treasure without which life itself was rendered a burden to me. I mentioned the time and place at which I had seen him, named all the persons who were present, and concluded with the following directions: He was to inquire for a Dollond's telescope, a Turkey carpet interwoven with gold, a marquee, and, finally, for some black steeds—the history, without entering into particulars, of all these being singularly connected with the mysterious character who seemed to pass unnoticed by every one, but whose appearance had destroyed the peace and happiness of my life.

As I spoke I produced as much gold as I could hold in my two hands, and added jewels and precious stones of still greater value. "Bendel," said I, "this smooths many a path, and renders that easy which seems almost impossible. Be not sparing of it, for I am not so; but go, and rejoice thy master with intelligence on which depend all his hopes."

He departed, and returned late and melancholy. None of Mr. John's servants, none of his guests (and Bendel had spoken to them all), had the slightest recollection of the man in the gray cloak. The new telescope was still there, but no one knew how it had come; and the tent

and Turkey carpet were still stretched out on the hill. The servants boasted of their master's wealth; but no one seemed to know by what means he had become possessed of these newly acquired luxuries. He was gratified; and it gave him no concern to be ignorant how they had come to him. The black coursers which had been mounted on that day were in the stables of the young gentlemen of the party, who admired them as the munificent present of Mr. John.

Such was the information I gained from Bendel's detailed account; but, in spite of this unsatisfactory result, his zeal and prudence deserved and received my commendation. In a gloomy mood, I made him a sign to withdraw.

"I have, sir," he continued, "laid before you all the information in my power relative to the subject of the most importance to you. I have now a message to deliver which I received early this morning from a person at the gate, as I was proceeding to execute the commission in which I have so unfortunately failed. The man's words were precisely these: 'Tell your master, Peter Schlemihl, he will not see me here again. I am going to cross the sea; a favorable wind now calls all the passengers on board; but in a year and a day I shall have the honor of paying him a visit; when, in all probability, I shall have a proposal to make to him of a very agreeable nature. Commend me to him most respectfully, with

many thanks.' I inquired his name; but he said you would remember him."

"What sort of a person was he?" cried I, in great emotion; and Bendel described the man in the gray coat feature by feature, word for word; in short, the very individual in search of whom he had been sent. "How unfortunate!" cried I bitterly; "it was himself." Scales, as it were, fell from Bendel's eyes. "Yes, it was he," cried he, "undoubtedly it was he; and fool, madman, that I was, I did not recognize him—I did not, and I have betrayed my master!" He then broke out into a torrent of self-reproach; and his distress really excited my compassion. I endeavored to console him, repeatedly assuring him that I entertained no doubt of his fidelity; and despatched him immediately to the wharf, to discover, if possible, some trace of the extraordinary being. But on that very morning many vessels which had been detained in port by contrary winds had set sail, all bound to different parts of the globe; and the gray man had disappeared like a shadow.

CHAPTER II.

Of what use were wings to a man fast bound in chains of iron? They would but increase the horror of his despair. Like the dragon guarding his treasure, I remained cut off from all human

intercourse, and starving amidst my very gold, for it gave me no pleasure: I anathematized it as the source of all my wretchedness.

Sole depository of my fearful secret, I trembled before the meanest of my attendants, whom, at the same time, I envied; for he possessed a shadow, and could venture to go out in the daytime, while I shut myself up in my room day and night, and indulged in all the bitterness of grief.

One individual, however, was daily pining away before my eyes—my faithful Bendel, who was the victim of silent self-reproach, tormenting himself with the idea that he had betrayed the confidence reposed in him by a good master, in failing to recognize the individual in quest of whom he had been sent, and with whom he had been led to believe that my melancholy fate was closely connected. Still, I had nothing to accuse him with, as I recognized in the occurrence the mysterious character of the unknown.

In order to leave no means untried, I one day despatched Bendel with a costly ring to the most celebrated artist in the town, desiring him to wait upon me. He came; and, dismissing the attendants, I secured the door, placing myself opposite to him, and, after extolling his art, with a heavy heart came to the point, first enjoining the strictest secrecy.

"For a person," said I, "who most unfortu-

nately has lost his shadow, could you paint a false one?"

"Do you speak of the natural shadow?"

"Precisely so."

"But," he asked, "by what awkward negligence can a man have lost his shadow?"

"How it occurred," I answered, "is of no consequence; but it was in this manner"—(and here I uttered an unblushing falsehood)—"he was travelling in Russia last winter, and one bitterly cold day it froze so intensely, that his shadow remained so fixed to the ground, that it was found impossible to remove it."

"The false shadow that I might paint," said the artist, "would be liable to be lost on the slightest movement, particularly in a person who, from your account, cares so little about his shadow. A person without a shadow should keep out of the sun, that is the only safe and rational plan."

He arose and took his leave, casting so penetrating a look at me that I shrank from it. I sank back in my chair, and hid my face in my hands.

In this attitude Bendel found me, and was about to withdraw silently and respectfully on seeing me in such a state of grief: looking up, overwhelmed with my sorrows, I felt that I must communicate them to him. "Bendel," I exclaimed, "Bendel, thou the only being who seest

and respectest my grief too much to inquire into its cause—thou who seemest silently and sincerely to sympathize with me—come and share my confidence. The extent of my wealth I have not withheld from thee, neither will I conceal from thee the extent of my grief. Bendel! forsake me not. Bendel, you see me rich, free, beneficent; you fancy all the world in my power; yet you must have observed that I shun it, and avoid all human intercourse. You think, Bendel, that the world and I are at variance; and you yourself, perhaps, will abandon me, when I acquaint you with this fearful secret. Bendel, I am rich, free, generous; but, O God, I have *no shadow!*

"No shadow!" exclaimed the faithful young man, tears starting from his eyes. "Alas! that I am born to serve a master without a shadow!" He was silent, and again I hid my face in my hands.

"Bendel," at last I tremblingly resumed, "you have now my confidence; you may betray me—go—bear witness against me!"

He seemed to be agitated with conflicting feelings; at last he threw himself at my feet and seized my hand, which he bathed with his tears. "No," he exclaimed; "whatever the world may say, I neither can nor will forsake my excellent master because he has lost his shadow. I will rather do what is right than what may seem pru-

dent. I will remain with you—I will shade you with my own shadow—I will assist you when I can—and when I cannot, I will weep with you."

I fell upon his neck, astonished at sentiments so unusual; for it was very evident that he was not prompted by the love of money.

My mode of life and my fate now became somewhat different. It is incredible with what provident foresight Bendel contrived to conceal my deficiency. Everywhere he was before me, and with me, providing against every contingency, and in cases of unlooked-for danger, flying to shield me with his own shadow, for he was taller and stouter than myself. Thus I once more ventured among mankind, and began to take a part in worldly affairs. I was compelled, indeed, to affect certain peculiarities and whims; but in a rich man they seem only appropriate; and so long as the truth was kept concealed I enjoyed all the honor and respect which gold could procure.

I now looked forward with more composure to the promised visit of the mysterious unknown at the expiration of the year and a day.

I was very sensible that I could not venture to remain long in a place where I had once been seen without a shadow, and where I might easily be betrayed; and perhaps, too, I recollected my first introduction to Mr. John, and this was by no means a pleasing reminiscence. However, I

wished just to make a trial here, that I might with greater ease and security visit some other place. But my vanity for some time withheld me, for it is in this quality of our race that the anchor takes the firmest hold.

Even the lovely Fanny, whom I again met in several places, without her seeming to recollect that she had ever seen me before, bestowed some notice on me; for wit and understanding were mine in abundance now. When I spoke, I was listened to; and I was at a loss to know how I had so easily acquired the art of commanding attention, and giving the tone to the conversation.

The impression which I perceived I had made upon this fair one completely turned my brain; and this was just what she wished. After that, I pursued her with infinite pains through every obstacle. My vanity was only intent on exciting hers to make a conquest of me; but although the intoxication disturbed my head, it failed to make the least impression on my heart.

But why detail to you the oft-repeated story which I have so often heard from yourself?

However, in the old and well-known drama in which I played so worn-out a part, a catastrophe occurred of quite a peculiar nature, in a manner equally unexpected to her, to me, and to everybody.

One beautiful evening I had, according to my usual custom, assembled a party in a garden, and

was walking arm-in-arm with Fanny at a little distance from the rest of the company, and pouring into her ear the usual well-turned phrases, while she was demurely gazing on vacancy, and now and then gently returning the pressure of my hand. The moon suddenly emerged from behind a cloud at our back. Fanny perceived only her own shadow before us. She started, looked at me with terror, and then again on the ground, in search of my shadow. All that was passing in her mind was so strangely depicted in her countenance, that I should have burst into a loud fit of laughter had I not suddenly felt my blood run cold within me. I suffered her to fall from my arm in a fainting-fit; shot with the rapidity of an arrow through the astonished guests, reached the gate, threw myself into the first conveyance I met with, and returned to the town, where this time, unfortunately, I had left the wary Bendel. He was alarmed on seeing me: one word explained all. Post-horses were immediately procured. I took with me none of my servants, one cunning knave only excepted, called Rascal, who had by his adroitness become very serviceable to me, and who at present knew nothing of what had occurred. I travelled thirty leagues that night; having left Bendel behind to discharge my servants, pay my debts, and bring me all that was necessary.

When he came up with me next day, I threw

myself into his arms, vowing to avoid such follies and to be more careful for the future.

We pursued our journey uninterruptedly over the frontiers and mountains; and it was not until I had placed this lofty barrier between myself and the before-mentioned unlucky town that I was persuaded to recruit myself after my fatigues in a neighboring and little-frequented watering-place.

I must now pass rapidly over one period of my history, on which how gladly would I dwell, could I conjure up your lively powers of delineation! But the vivid hues which are at your command, and which alone can give life and animation to the picture, have left no trace within me; and were I now to endeavor to recall the joys, the griefs, the pure and enchanting emotions, which once held such powerful dominion in my breast, it would be like striking a rock which yields no longer the living spring, and whose spirit has fled for ever. With what an altered aspect do those bygone days now present themselves to my gaze!

In this watering-place I acted an heroic character, badly studied; and being a novice on such a stage, I forgot my part before a pair of lovely blue eyes.

All possible means were used by the infatuated parents to conclude the bargain; and deception

put an end to these usual artifices. And that is all—all.

The powerful emotions which once swelled my bosom seem now in the retrospect to be poor and insipid, nay, even terrible to me.

Alas, Minna! as I wept for thee the day I lost thee, so do I now weep that I can no longer retrace thine image in my soul.

Am I, then, so far advanced into the vale of years? O fatal effects of maturity! would that I could feel one throb, one emotion of former days of enchantment—alas, not one! a solitary being, tossed on the wild ocean of life—it is long since I drained thine enchanted cup to the dregs!

But to return to my narrative. I had sent Bendel to the little town with plenty of money to procure me a suitable habitation. He spent my gold profusely; and as he expressed himself rather reservedly concerning his distinguished master (for I did not wish to be named), the good people began to form rather extraordinary conjectures.

As soon as my house was ready for my reception, Bendel returned to conduct me to it. We set out on our journey. About a league from the town, on a sunny plain, we were stopped by a crowd of people, arrayed in holiday attire for some festival. The carriage stopped. Music, bells, cannons, were heard; and loud acclamations rang through the air.

Before the carriage now appeared in white dresses a chorus of maidens, all of extraordinary beauty; but one of them shone in resplendent loveliness, and eclipsed the rest as the sun eclipses the stars of night. She advanced from the midst of her companions, and, with a lofty yet winning air, blushingly knelt before me, presenting on a silken cushion a wreath, composed of laurel branches, the olive, and the rose, saying something respecting majesty, love, honor, etc., which I could not comprehend; but the sweet and silvery magic of her tones intoxicated my senses and my whole soul: it seemed as if some heavenly apparition were hovering over me. The chorus now began to sing the praises of a good sovereign and the happiness of his subjects. All this, dear Chamisso, took place in the sun: she was kneeling two steps from me, and I, without a shadow, could not dart through the air, nor fall on my knees before the angelic being. Oh, what would I not now have given for a shadow! To conceal my shame, agony, and despair, I buried myself in the recesses of the carriage. Bendel at last thought of an expedient; he jumped out of the carriage. I called him back, and gave him out of the casket I had by me a rich diamond coronet, which had been intended for the lovely Fanny.

He stepped forward, and spoke in the name of his master, who, he said, was overwhelmed by so

many demonstrations of respect, which he really could not accept as an honor—there must be some error; nevertheless he begged to express his thanks for the goodwill of the worthy townspeople. In the meantime Bendel had taken the wreath from the cushion, and laid the brilliant crown in its place. He then respectfully raised the lovely girl from the ground; and, at one sign, the clergy, magistrates, and all the deputations withdrew. The crowd separated to allow the horses to pass, and we pursued our way to the town at full gallop, through arches ornamented with flowers and branches of laurel. Salvos of artillery again were heard. The carriage stopped at my gate; I hastened through the crowd which curiosity had attracted to witness my arrival. Enthusiastic shouts resounded under my windows, from whence I showered gold amidst the people; and in the evening the whole town was illuminated. Still all remained a mystery to me, and I could not imagine for whom I had been taken. I sent Rascal out to make inquiry; and he soon obtained intelligence that the good King of Prussia was travelling through the country under the name of some count; that my *aide-de-camp* had been recognized, and that he had divulged the secret; that on acquiring the certainty that I would enter their town, their joy had known no bounds: however, as they perceived I was determined on preserving the strictest *incognito*, they felt how

wrong they had been in too importunately seeking to withdraw the veil; but I had received them so condescendingly and so graciously, that they were sure I would forgive them. The whole affair was such capital amusement to the unprincipled Rascal, that he did his best to confirm the good people in their belief, while affecting to reprove them. He gave me a very comical account of the matter; and, seeing that I was amused by it, actually endeavored to make a merit of his impudence.

Shall I own the truth? My vanity was flattered by having been mistaken for our revered sovereign. I ordered a banquet to be got ready for the following evening, under the trees before my house, and invited the whole town. The mysterious power of my purse, Bendel's exertions, and Rascal's ready invention made the shortness of the time seem as nothing.

It was really astonishing how magnificently and beautifully everything was arranged in these few hours. Splendor and abundance vied with each other, and the lights were so carefully arranged that I felt quite safe: the zeal of my servants met every exigency and merited all praise.

Evening drew on, the guests arrived, and were presented to me. The word *majesty* was now dropped; but, with the deepest respect and humility, I was addressed as the *count*. What could I do? I accepted the title, and from that

moment I was known as Count Peter. In the midst of all this festivity my soul pined for one individual. She came late—she who was the empress of the scene, and wore the emblem of sovereignty on her brow.

She modestly accompanied her parents, and seemed unconscious of her transcendent beauty.

The Ranger of the Forests, his wife, and daughter were presented to me. I was at no loss to make myself agreeable to the parents; but before the daughter I stood like a well-scolded schoolboy, incapable of speaking a single word.

At length I hesitatingly entreated her to honor my banquet by presiding at it—an office for which her rare endowments pointed her out as admirably fitted. With a blush and an expressive glance she entreated to be excused; but, in still greater confusion than herself, I respectfully begged her to accept the homage of the first and most devoted of her subjects, and one glance of the count was the same as a command to the guests, who all vied with each other in acting up to the spirit of the noble host.

In her person, majesty, innocence, and grace, in union with beauty, presided over this joyous banquet. Minna's happy parents were elated by the honors conferred upon their child. As for me, I abandoned myself to all the intoxication of delight: I sent for all the jewels, pearls, and

precious stones still left to me—the produce of my fatal wealth—and, filling two vases, I placed them on the table, in the name of the queen of the banquet, to be divided among her companions and the remainder of the ladies.

I ordered gold, in the meantime, to be showered down without ceasing among the happy multitude.

Next morning Bendel told me in confidence that the suspicions he had long entertained of Rascal's honesty were now reduced to a certainty; he had yesterday embezzled many bags of gold.

"Never mind," said I; "let him enjoy his paltry booty. *I* like to spend it; why should not he? Yesterday he, and all the newly-engaged servants whom you had hired, served me honorably, and cheerfully assisted me to enjoy the banquet."

No more was said on the subject. Rascal remained at the head of my domestics. Bendel was my friend and confidant; he had by this time become accustomed to look upon my wealth as inexhaustible, without seeking to inquire into its source. He entered into all my schemes, and effectually assisted me in devising methods of spending my money.

Of the pale, sneaking scoundrel—the unknown—Bendel only knew thus much, that he alone had power to release me from the curse which weighed so heavily on me, and yet that I stood

in awe of him on whom all my hopes rested. Besides, I felt convinced that he had the means of discovering *me* under any circumstances, while he himself remained concealed. I therefore abandoned my fruitless inquiries, and patiently awaited the appointed day.

The magnificence of my banquet, and my deportment on the occasion, had but strengthened the credulous townspeople in their previous belief.

It appeared soon after, from accounts in the newspapers, that the whole history of the King of Prussia's fictitious journey originated in mere idle report. But a king I was, and a king I must remain by all means; and one of the richest and most royal, although people were at a loss to know where my territories lay.

The world has never had reason to lament the scarcity of monarchs, particularly in these days; and the good people, who had never yet seen a king, now fancied me to be first one, and then another, with equal success; and in the meanwhile I remained as before, Count Peter.

Among the visitors at this watering-place a merchant made his appearance, one who had become a bankrupt in order to enrich himself. He enjoyed the general good opinion; for he projected a shadow of respectable size, though of somewhat faint hue.

This man wished to show off in this place by

means of his wealth, and sought to rival me. My purse soon enabled me to leave the poor devil far behind. To save his credit he became bankrupt again, and fled beyond the mountains; and thus I was rid of him. Many a one in this place was reduced to beggary and ruin through my means.

In the midst of the really princely magnificence and profusion, which carried all before me, my own style of living was very simple and retired. I had made it a point to observe the strictest precaution; and, with the exception of Bendel, no one was permitted, on any pretence whatever, to enter my private apartment. As long as the sun shone I remained shut up with him; and the Count was then said to be deeply occupied in his closet. The numerous couriers, whom I kept in constant attendance about matters of no importance, were supposed to be the bearers of my despatches. I only received company in the evening under the trees of my garden, or in my saloons, after Bendel's assurance of their being carefully and brilliantly lit up.

My walks, in which the Argus-eyed Bendel was constantly on the watch for me, extended only to the garden of the forest-ranger, to enjoy the society of one who was dear to me as my own existence.

Oh, my Chamisso! I trust thou hast not forgotten what love is! I must here leave much

to thine imagination. Minna was in truth an amiable and excellent maiden: her whole soul was wrapped up in me, and in her lowly thoughts of herself she could not imagine how she had deserved a single thought from me. She returned love for love with all the full and youthful fervor of an innocent heart; her love was a true woman's love, with all the devotion and total absence of selfishness which is found only in woman; she lived but in me, her whole soul being bound up in mine, regardless what her own fate might be.

Yet I, alas, during those hours of wretchedness —hours I would even now gladly recall—how often have I wept on Bendel's bosom, when after the first mad whirlwind of passion I reflected, with the keenest self-upbraidings, that I, a shadowless man, had, with cruel selfishness, practised a wicked deception, and stolen away the pure and angelic heart of the innocent Minna!

At one moment I resolved to confess all to her; then that I would fly for ever; then I broke out into a flood of bitter tears, and consulted Bendel as to the means of meeting her again in the forester's garden.

At times I flattered myself with great hopes from the near approaching visit of the unknown; then wept again, because I saw clearly on reflection that they would end in disappointment. I had made a calculation of the day fixed on by

the fearful being for our interview; for he had said in a year and a day, and I depended on his word.

The parents were worthy old people, devoted to their only child; and our mutual affection was a circumstance so overwhelming that they knew not how to act. They had never dreamed for a moment that the *Count* could bestow a thought on their daughter; but such was the case—he loved and was beloved. The pride of the mother might not have led her to consider such an alliance quite impossible, but so extravagant an idea had never entered the contemplation of the sounder judgment of the old man. Both were satisfied of the sincerity of my love, and could but put up prayers to Heaven for the happiness of their child.

A letter which I received from Minna about that time has just fallen into my hands. Yes, these are the characters traced by her own hand. I will transcribe the letter:

"I am indeed a weak, foolish girl to fancy that the friend I so tenderly love could give an instant's pain to his poor Minna! Oh no! thou art so good, so inexpressibly good! But do not misunderstand me. I will accept no sacrifice at thy hands—none whatever. Oh heavens! I should hate myself! No; thou hast made me happy, thou hast taught me to love thee.

"Go, then—let me not forget my destiny—

Count Peter belongs not to me, but to the whole world; and oh! what pride for thy Minna to hear thy deeds proclaimed, and blessings invoked on thy idolized head! Ah! when I think of this, I could chide thee that thou shouldst for one instant forget thy high destiny for the sake of a simple maiden! Go, then; otherwise the reflection will pierce me. How blest I have been rendered by thy love! Perhaps, also, I have planted some flowers in the path of thy life, as I twined them in the wreath which I presented to thee.

"Go, then—fear not to leave me—you are too deeply seated in my heart—I shall die inexpressibly happy in thy love."

Conceive how these words pierced my soul, Chamisso!

I declared to her that I was not what I seemed—that, although a rich, I was an unspeakably miserable man—that a curse was on me, which must remain a secret, although the only one between us—yet that I was not without a hope of its being removed—that this poisoned every hour of my life—that I should plunge her with me into the abyss—she, the light and joy, the very soul of my existence. Then she wept because I was unhappy. Oh! Minna was all love and tenderness. To save me one tear she would gladly have sacrificed her life. Yet she was far from comprehending the full meaning of my words. She still looked upon me as some proscribed prince or

illustrious exile; and her vivid imagination had invested her lover with every lofty attribute.

One day I said to her, "Minna, the last day in next month will decide my fate, and perhaps change it for the better; if not, I would sooner die than render you miserable."

She laid her head on my shoulder to conceal her tears. "Should thy fate be changed," she said, "I only wish to know that thou art happy; if thy condition is an unhappy one, I will share it with thee, and assist thee to support it."

"Minna, Minna!" I exclaimed, "recall those rash words—those mad words which have escaped thy lips! Didst thou know the misery and curse—didst thou know who—what—thy lover . . . Seest thou not, my Minna, this convulsive shuddering which thrills my whole frame, and that there is a secret in my breast which you cannot penetrate?" She sank sobbing at my feet, and renewed her vows and entreaties.

Her father now entered, and I declared to him my intention to solicit the hand of his daughter on the first day of the month after the ensuing one. I fixed that time, I told him, because circumstances might probably occur in the interval materially to influence my future destiny; but my love for his daughter was unchangeable.

The good old man started at hearing such words from the mouth of Count Peter. He fell upon my neck, and rose again in the utmost con-

fusion for having forgotten himself. Then he began to doubt, to ponder, and to scrutinize; and spoke of dowry, security, and future provision for his beloved child. I thanked him for having reminded me of all this, and told him it was my wish to remain in a country where I seemed to be beloved, and to lead a life free from anxiety. I then commissioned him to purchase the finest estate in the neighborhood in the name of his daughter—for a father was the best person to act for his daughter in such a case—and to refer for payment to me. This occasioned him a good deal of trouble, as a stranger had everywhere anticipated him; but at last he made a purchase for about £150,000.

I confess this was but an innocent artifice to get rid of him, as I had frequently done before; for it must be confessed that he was somewhat tedious. The good mother was rather deaf, and not jealous, like her husband, of the honor of conversing with the Count.

The happy party pressed me to remain with them longer this evening. I dared not—I had not a moment to lose. I saw the rising moon streaking the horizon—my hour was come.

Next evening I went again to the forester's garden. I had wrapped myself closely up in my cloak, slouched my hat over my eyes, and advanced towards Minna. As she raised her head and looked at me, she started involuntarily. The

apparition of that dreadful night in which I had been seen without a shadow was now standing distinctly before me—it was she herself. Had she recognized me? She was silent and thoughtful. I felt an oppressive load at my heart. I rose from my seat. She laid her head on my shoulder, still silent and in tears. I went away.

I now found her frequently weeping. I became more and more melancholy. Her parents were beyond expression happy. The eventful day approached, threatening and heavy, like a thunder-cloud. The evening preceding arrived. I could scarcely breathe. I had carefully filled a large chest with gold, and sat down to await the appointed time—the twelfth hour—it struck.

Now I remained with my eyes fixed on the hand of the clock, counting the seconds—the minutes—which struck me to the heart like daggers. I started at every sound—at last daylight appeared. The leaden hours passed on—morning—evening—night came. Hope was fast fading away as the hand advanced. It struck eleven—no one appeared—the last minutes—the first and last stroke of the twelfth hour died away. I sank back in my bed in an agony of weeping. In the morning I should, shadowless as I was, claim the hand of my beloved Minna. A heavy sleep towards daylight closed my eyes.

CHAPTER III.

It was yet early, when I was suddenly awoke by voices in hot dispute in my ante-chamber. I listened. Bendel was forbidding Rascal to enter my room, who swore he would receive no orders from his equals,and insisted on forcing his way. The faithful Bendel reminded him that if such words reached his master's ears, he would turn him out of an excellent place. Rascal threatened to strike him if he persisted in refusing his entrance.

By this time, having half-dressed myself, I angrily threw open the door, and addressing myself to Rascal, inquired what he meant by such disgraceful conduct. He drew back a couple of steps, and coolly answered: "Count Peter, may I beg most respectfully that you will favor me with a sight of your shadow? The sun is now shining brightly in the court below."

I stood as if struck by a thunderbolt, and for some time was unable to speak. At last I asked him how a servant could dare to behave so towards his master. He interrupted me by saying, quite coolly, "A servant may be a very honorable man, and unwilling to serve a shadowless master—I request my dismissal."

I felt that I must adopt a softer tone, and replied, "But, Rascal, my good fellow, who can

have put such strange ideas into your head? How can you imagine—"

He again interrupted me in the same tone—"People say you have no shadow. In short, let me see your shadow, or give me my dismissal."

Bendel, pale and trembling, but more collected than myself, made a sign to me. I had recourse to the all-powerful influence of gold. But even gold had lost its power—Rascal threw it at my feet: "From a shadowless man," he said, "I will take nothing."

Turning his back upon me, and putting on his hat, he then slowly left the room, whistling a tune. I stood, with Bendel, as if petrified, gazing after him.

With a deep sigh and a heavy heart I now prepared to keep my engagement, and to appear in the forester's garden like a criminal before his judge. I entered by the shady arbor, which had received the name of Count Peter's arbor, where we had appointed to meet. The mother advanced with a cheerful air; Minna sat fair and beautiful as the early snow of autumn reposing on the departing flowers, soon to be dissolved and lost in the cold stream.

The ranger, with a written paper in his hand, was walking up and down in an agitated manner, and struggling to suppress his feelings—his usually unmoved countenance being one moment flushed and the next perfectly pale. He came

forward as I entered, and, in a faltering voice, requested a private conversation with me. The path by which he requested me to follow him led to an open spot in the garden, where the sun was shining. I sat down. A long silence ensued, which even the good woman herself did not venture to break. The ranger, in an agitated manner, paced up and down with unequal steps. At last he stood still; and glancing over the paper he held in his hand, he said, addressing me with a penetrating look, "Count Peter, do you know one Peter Schlemihl?" I was silent.

"A man," he continued, "of excellent character and extraordinary endowments."

He paused for an answer. "And supposing I myself were that very man?"

"You!" he exclaimed passionately; "he has lost his shadow!"

"Oh, my suspicion is true!" cried Minna; "I have long known it—he has no shadow!" And she threw herself into her mother's arms, who, convulsively clasping her to her bosom, reproached her for having so long, to her hurt, kept such a secret. But, like the fabled Arethusa, her tears, as from a fountain, flowed more abundantly, and her sobs increased at my approach.

"And so," said the ranger fiercely, "you have not scrupled, with unparalleled shamelessness, to deceive both her and me; and you pretended to love her, forsooth!—her whom you have reduced

to the state in which you now see her. See how she weeps !—Oh, shocking, shocking ! "

By this time I had lost all presence of mind ; and I answered, confusedly : " After all, it is but a shadow, a mere shadow, which a man can do very well without ; and really it is not worth the while to make all this noise about such a trifle." Feeling the groundlessness of what I was saying, I ceased, and no one condescended to reply. At last I added : " What is lost to-day may be found to-morrow."

" Be pleased, sir," continued the ranger, in great wrath—" be pleased to explain how you have lost your shadow."

Here again an excuse was ready : " A boor of a fellow," said I, " one day trod so rudely on my shadow that he tore a large hole in it. I sent it to be repaired—for gold can do wonders—and yesterday I expected it home again."

" Very well," answered the ranger. " You are a suitor for my daughter's hand, and so are others. As a father, I am bound to provide for her. I will give you three days to seek your shadow. Return to me in the course of that time with a well-fitted shadow, and you shall receive a hearty welcome ; otherwise, on the fourth day—remember, on the fourth day—my daughter becomes the wife of another."

I now attempted to say one word to Minna ; but, sobbing more violently, she clung still closer

to her mother, who made a sign for me to withdraw. I obeyed; and now the world seemed shut out from me for ever.

Having escaped from the affectionate care of Bendel, I now wandered wildly through the neighboring woods and meadows. Drops of anguish fell from my brow, deep groans burst from my bosom—frenzied despair raged within me.

I knew not how long this had lasted, when I felt myself seized by the sleeve on a sunny heath. I stopped, and looking up, beheld the gray-coated man, who appeared to have run himself out of breath in pursuing me. He immediately began: "I had," said he, "appointed this day; but your impatience anticipated it. All, however, may yet be right. Take my advice—redeem your shadow, which is at your command, and return immediately to the ranger's garden, where you will be well received, and all the past will seem a mere joke. As for Rascal—who has betrayed you in order to pay his addresses to Minna—leave him to me; he is just a fit subject for me."

I stood like one in a dream. "This day?" I considered again. He was right—I had made a mistake of a day. I felt in my bosom for the purse. He perceived my intention, and drew back.

"No, Count Peter; the purse is in good hands—pray keep it." I gazed at him with looks of astonishment and inquiry. "I only beg a trifle

as a token of remembrance. Be so good as to sign this memorandum." On the parchment, which he held out to me, were these words: "By virtue of this present, to which I have appended my signature, I hereby bequeath my soul to the holder, after its natural separation from my body."

I gazed in mute astonishment alternately at the paper and the gray unknown. In the meantime he had dipped a new pen in a drop of blood which was issuing from a scratch in my hand just made by a thorn. He presented it to me. "Who are you?" at last I exclaimed. "What can it signify?" he answered: "do you not perceive who I am? A poor devil—a sort of scholar and philosopher, who obtains but poor thanks from his friends for his admirable arts, and whose only amusement on earth consists in his small experiments. But just sign this; to the right, exactly underneath—Peter Schlemihl."

I shook my head, and replied: "Excuse me, sir; I cannot sign that."

"Cannot!" he exclaimed; "and why not?"

"Because it appears to me a hazardous thing to exchange my soul for my shadow."

"Hazardous!" he exclaimed, bursting into a loud laugh. "And, pray, may I be allowed to inquire what sort of a thing your soul is?—have you ever seen it?—and what do you mean to do with it after your death? You ought to think

yourself fortunate in meeting with a customer who, during your life, in exchange for this infinitely minute quantity, this galvanic principle, this polarized agency, or whatever other foolish name you may give it, is willing to bestow on you something substantial—in a word, your own identical shadow, by virtue of which you will obtain your beloved Minna, and arrive at the accomplishment of all your wishes; or do you prefer giving up the poor young girl to the power of that contemptible scoundrel Rascal? Nay, you shall behold her with your own eyes. Come here; I will lend you an invisible cap (he drew something out of his pocket), and we will enter the ranger's garden unseen."

I must confess that I felt excessively ashamed to be thus laughed at by the gray stranger. I detested him from the very bottom of my soul; and I really believe this personal antipathy, more than principle or previously formed opinion, restrained me from purchasing my shadow, much as I stood in need of it, at such an expense. Besides, the thought was insupportable of making this proposed visit in his society. To behold this hateful sneak, this mocking fiend, place himself between me and my beloved, between our torn and bleeding hearts, was too revolting an idea to be entertained for a moment. I considered the past as irrevocable, my own misery as inevitable; and turning to the gray man, I said:

"I have exchanged my shadow for this very extraordinary purse, and I have sufficiently repented it. For Heaven's sake, let the transaction be declared null and void!" He shook his head, and his countenance assumed an expression of the most sinister cast. I continued: "I will make no exchange whatever, even for the sake of my shadow, nor will I sign the paper. It follows, also, that the *incognito* visit you propose to me would afford you far more entertainment than it could possibly give me. Accept my excuses, therefore; and, since it must be so, let us part."

"I am sorry, Mr. Schlemihl, that you thus obstinately persist in rejecting my friendly offer. Perhaps, another time, I may be more fortunate. Farewell! May we shortly meet again! But, *à propos*, allow me to show you that I do not undervalue my purchase, but preserve it carefully."

So saying, he drew my shadow out of his pocket; and shaking it cleverly out of its folds, he stretched it out at his feet in the sun—so that he stood between two obedient shadows, his own and mine, which was compelled to follow and comply with his every movement.

On again beholding my poor shadow after so long a separation, and seeing it degraded to so vile a bondage at the very time that I was so unspeakably in want of it, my heart was ready to burst, and I wept bitterly. The detested wretch

stood exulting over his prey, and unblushingly renewed his proposal. "One stroke of your pen, and the unhappy Minna is rescued from the clutches of the villain Rascal, and transferred to the arms of the high-born Count Peter—merely a stroke of your pen!"

My tears broke out with renewed violence; but I turned away from him, and made a sign for him to be gone.

Bendel, whose deep solicitude had induced him to come in search of me, arrived at this very moment. The good and faithful creature, on seeing me weeping, and that a shadow (evidently mine) was in the power of the mysterious unknown, determined to rescue it by force, should that be necessary; and disdaining to use any *finesse*, he desired him directly, and without any disputing, to restore my property. Instead of a reply, the gray man turned his back on the worthy fellow, and was making off. But Bendel raised his buck-thorn stick; and following close upon him, after repeated commands, but in vain, to restore the shadow, he made him feel the whole force of his powerful arm. The gray man, as if accustomed to such treatment, held down his head, slouched his shoulders, and, with soft and noiseless steps, pursued his way over the heath, carrying with him my shadow, and also my faithful servant. For a long time I heard hollow sounds ringing through the waste, until at last they died away

in the distance, and I was again left to solitude and misery.

Alone on the wild heath, I disburdened my heart of an insupportable load by given free vent to my tears. But I saw no bounds, no relief, to my surpassing wretchedness; and I drank in the fresh poison which the mysterious stranger had poured into my wounds with a furious avidity. As I retraced in my mind the loved image of my Minna, and depicted her sweet countenance all pale and in tears, such as I had beheld her in my late disgrace, the bold and sarcastic visage of Rascal would ever and anon thrust itself between us. I hid my face, and fled rapidly over the plains; but the horrible vision unrelentingly pursued me, till at last I sank breathless on the ground, and bedewed it with a fresh torrent of tears—and all this for a shadow!—a shadow which one stroke of the pen would repurchase. I pondered on the singular proposal, and on my hesitation to comply with it. My mind was confused—I had lost the power of judging or comprehending. The day was waning apace. I satisfied the cravings of hunger with a few wild fruits, and quenched my thirst at a neighboring stream. Night came on; I threw myself down under a tree, and was awoke by the damp morning air from an uneasy sleep, in which I had fancied myself struggling in the agonies of death.

Bendel had certainly lost all trace of me, and I was glad of it. I did not wish to return among my fellow-creatures—I shunned them as the hunted deer flies before its pursuers. Thus I passed three melancholy days.

I found myself on the morning of the fourth on a sandy plain, basking in the rays of the sun, and sitting on a fragment of rock; for it was sweet to enjoy the genial warmth of which I had so long been deprived. Despair still preyed on my heart. Suddenly a slight sound startled me; I looked round, prepared to fly, but saw no one. On the sunlit sand before me flitted the shadow of a man not unlike my own; and wandering about alone, it seemed to have lost its master. This sight powerfully excited me. "Shadow!" thought I, "art thou in search of thy master? in me thou shalt find him." And I sprang forward to seize it, fancying that could I succeed in treading so exactly in its traces as to step in its footmarks, it would attach itself to me, and in time become accustomed to me, and follow all my movements.

The shadow, as I moved, took to flight, and I commenced a hot chase after the airy fugitive, solely excited by the hope of being delivered from my present dreadful situation; the bare idea inspired me with fresh strength and vigor.

The shadow now fled towards a distant wood, among whose shades I must necessarily have

lost it. Seeing this, my heart beat wild with fright, my ardor increased and lent wings to my speed. I was evidently gaining on the shadow —I came nearer and nearer—I was within reach of it, when it suddenly stopped and turned towards me. Like a lion darting on its prey, I made a powerful spring and fell unexpectedly upon a hard substance. Then followed, from an invisible hand, the most terrible blows in the ribs that any one ever received. The effect of my terror made me endeavor convulsively to strike and grasp at the unseen object before me. The rapidity of my motions brought me to the ground, where I lay stretched out with a man under me, whom I held tight, and who now became visible.

The whole affair was now explained. The man had undoubtedly possessed the bird's nest which communicates its charm of invisibility to its possessor, though not equally so to his shadow; and this nest he had now thrown away. I looked all round, and soon discovered the shadow of this invisible nest. I sprang towards it, and was fortunate enough to seize the precious booty, and immediately became invisible and shadowless.

The moment the man regained his feet he looked all round over the wide sunny plain to discover his fortunate vanquisher, but could see neither him nor his shadow, the latter seeming particularly to be the object of his search: for previous to our encounter he had not had leisure

to observe that I was shadowless, and he could not be aware of it. Becoming convinced that all traces of me were lost, he began to tear his hair, and give himself up to all the frenzy of despair. In the meantime, this newly acquired treasure communicated to me both the ability and the desire to mix again among mankind.

I was at no loss for a pretext to vindicate this unjust robbery—or, rather, so deadened had I become, I felt no need of a pretext; and in order to dissipate every idea of the kind, I hastened on, regardless of the unhappy man, whose fearful lamentations long resounded in my ears. Such, at the time, were my impressions of all the circumstances of this affair.

I now ardently desired to return to the ranger's garden, in order to ascertain in person the truth of the information communicated by the odious unknown; but I knew not where I was, until, ascending an eminence to take a survey of the surrounding country, I perceived, from its summit, the little town and the gardens almost at my feet. My heart beat violently, and tears of a nature very different from those I had lately shed filled my eyes. I should, then, once more behold her!

Anxiety now hastened my steps. Unseen, I met some peasants coming from the town; they were talking of me, of Rascal, and of the ranger. I would not stay to listen to their conversation,

but proceeded on. My bosom thrilled with expectation as I entered the garden. At this moment I heard something like a hollow laugh which caused me involuntarily to shudder. I cast a rapid glance around, but could see no one. I passed on; presently I fancied I heard the sound of footsteps close to me, but no one was within sight. My ears must have deceived me.

It was early; no one was in Count Peter's bower—the gardens were deserted. I traversed all the well-known paths, and penetrated even to the dwelling-house itself. The same rustling sound became now more and more audible. With anguished feelings I sat down on a seat placed in the sunny space before the door, and actually felt some invisible fiend take a place by me, and heard him utter a sarcastic laugh. The key was turned in the door, which was opened. The forest-master appeared with a paper in his hand. Suddenly my head was, as it were, enveloped in a mist. I looked up, and, oh horror! the gray-coated man was at my side, peering in my face with a satanic grin. He had extended the mist-cap he wore over my head. His shadow and my own were lying together at his feet in perfect amity. He kept twirling in his hand the well-known parchment with an air of indifference; and while the ranger, absorbed in thought, and intent upon his paper, paced up and down the arbor, my tormentor confidentially leaned to-

wards me, and whispered: "So, Mr. Schlemihl, you have at length accepted my invitation; and here we sit, two heads under one hood, as the saying is. Well, well, all in good time. But now you can return me my bird's nest—you have no further occasion for it; and I am sure you are too honorable a man to withhold it from me. No need of thanks, I assure you; I had infinite pleasure in lending it to you." He took it out of my unresisting hand, put it into his pocket, and then broke into so loud a laugh at my expense, that the forest-master turned round, startled at the sound. I was petrified. "You must acknowledge," he continued, "that in our position a hood is much more convenient. It serves to conceal not only a man, but his shadow, or as many shadows as he chooses to carry. I, for instance, to-day bring two, you perceive." He laughed again. "Take notice, Schlemihl, that what a man refuses to do with a good grace in the first instance, he is always in the end compelled to do. I am still of opinion that you ought to redeem your shadow and claim your bride (for it is yet time); and as to Rascal, he shall dangle at a rope's end—no difficult matter, so long as we can find a bit. As a mark of friendship I will give you my cap into the bargain."

The mother now came out, and the following conversation took place: "What is Minna doing?"—"She is weeping."—"Silly child! what

good can that do?"—"None, certainly; but it is so soon to bestow her hand on another. O husband, you are too harsh to your poor child."—"No, wife; you view things in a wrong light. When she finds herself the wife of a wealthy and honorable man, her tears will soon cease; she will waken out of a dream, as it were, happy and grateful to Heaven and to her parents, as you will see."—"Heaven grant it may be so!" replied the wife. "She has, indeed, now considerable property; but after the noise occasioned by her unlucky affair with that adventurer, do you imagine that she is likely soon to meet with so advantageous a match as Mr. Rascal? Do you know the extent of Mr. Rascal's influence and wealth? Why, he has purchased with ready money, in this country, six millions of landed property, free from all encumbrances. I have had all the documents in my hands. It was he who outbid me everywhere when I was about to make a desirable purchase; and, besides, he has bills on Mr. Thomas John's house to the amount of three millions and a half."—"He must have been a prodigious thief!"—"How foolishly you talk! he wisely saved where others squandered their property."—"A mere livery-servant!"—"Nonsense! he has at all events an unexceptionable shadow."—"True, but . . ."

While this conversation was passing, the gray-coated man looked at me with a satirical smile.

The door opened, and Minna entered, leaning on the arm of her female attendant, silent tears flowing down her fair but pallid face. She seated herself in the chair which had been placed for her under the lime trees, and her father took a stool by her side. He gently raised her hand; and as her tears flowed afresh, he addressed her in the most affectionate manner:

"My own dear, good child—my Minna—will act reasonably, and not afflict her poor old father, who only wishes to make her happy. My dearest child, this blow has shaken you—dreadfully, I know it; but you have been saved, as by a miracle, from a miserable fate, my Minna. You loved the unworthy villain most tenderly before his treachery was discovered: I feel all this, Minna; and far be it from me to reproach you for it—in fact, I myself loved him so long as I considered him to be a person of rank: you now see yourself how differently it has turned out. Every dog has a shadow; and the idea of my child having been on the eve of uniting herself to a man who . . . but I am sure you will think no more of him. A suitor has just appeared for you in the person of a man who does not fear the sun—an honorable man—no prince indeed, but a man worth ten millions of golden ducats sterling—a sum nearly ten times larger than your fortune consists of—a man, too, who will make my dear child happy—nay, do not oppose me—

be my own good, dutiful child—allow your loving father to provide for you, and to dry up these tears. Promise to bestow your hand on Mr. Rascal. Speak my child: will you not?"

Minna could scarcely summon strength to reply that she had now no longer any hopes or desires on earth, and that she was entirely at her father's disposal. Rascal was therefore immediately sent for, and entered the room with his usual forwardness; but Minna in the meantime had swooned away.

My detested companion looked at me indignantly, and whispered: "Can you endure this? Have you no blood in your veins?" He instantly pricked my finger, which bled. "Yes, positively," he exclaimed, "you have some blood left!—come, sign." The parchment and pen were in my hand! . . .

CHAPTER IV.

I SUBMIT myself to thy judgment, my dear Chamisso; I do not seek to bias it. I have long been a rigid censor of myself, and nourished at my heart the worm of remorse. This critical moment of my life is ever present to my soul, and I dare only cast a hesitating glance at it, with a deep sense of humiliation and grief. Ah, my dear friend, he who once permits himself thoughtlessly to deviate but one step from the right road will

imperceptibly find himself involved in various intricate paths, all leading him farther and farther astray. In vain he beholds the guiding-stars of heaven shining before him. No choice is left him—he must descend the precipice, and offer himself up a sacrifice to his fate. After the false step which I had rashly made, and which entailed a curse upon me, I had, in the wantonness of passion, entangled one in my fate who had staked all her happiness upon me. What was left for me to do in a case where I had brought another into misery, but to make a desperate leap in the dark to save her?—the last, the only means of rescue presented itself. Think not so meanly of me, Chamisso, as to imagine that I would have shrunk from any sacrifice on my part. In such a case it would have been but a poor ransom. No, Chamisso; but my whole soul was filled with unconquerable hatred to the cringing knave and his crooked ways. I might be doing him injustice; but I shuddered at the bare idea of entering into any fresh compact with him. But here a circumstance took place which entirely changed the face of things. . . .

I know not whether to ascribe it to excitement of mind, exhaustion of physical strength (for during the last few days I had scarcely tasted anything), or the antipathy I felt to the society of my fiendish companion; but just as I was about to sign the fatal paper, I fell into a deep swoon,

and remained for a long time as if dead. The first sounds which greeted my ears on recovering my consciousness were those of cursing and imprecation; I opened my eyes—it was dusk; my hateful companion was overwhelming me with reproaches. "Is not this behaving like an old woman? Come, rise up, and finish quickly what you were going to do; or perhaps you have changed your determination, and prefer to lie groaning there?"

I raised myself with difficulty from the ground and gazed around me without speaking a word. It was late in the evening, and I heard strains of festive music proceeding from the ranger's brilliantly illuminated house; groups of company were lounging about the gardens; two persons approached, and seating themselves on the bench I had lately occupied, began to converse on the subject of the marriage which had taken place that morning between the wealthy Mr. Rascal and Minna. All was then over.

I tore off the cap which rendered me invisible; and my companion having disappeared, I plunged in silence into the thickest gloom of the grove, rapidly passed Count Peter's bower towards the entrance-gate; but my tormentor still haunted me, and loaded me with reproaches. "And is this all the gratitude I am to expect from you, Mr. Schlemihl—you, whom I have been watching all the weary day, until you should recover from

your nervous attack? What a fool's part I have been enacting! It is of no use flying from me, Mr. Perverse—we are inseparable—you have my gold, I have your shadow; this exchange deprives us both of peace. Did you ever hear of a man's shadow leaving him?—yours follows me until you receive it again into favor, and thus free me from it. Disgust and weariness sooner or later will compel you to do what you should have done gladly at first. In vain you strive with fate!"

He continued unceasingly in the same tone, uttering constant sarcasms about the gold and the shadow, till I was completely bewildered. To fly from him was impossible. I had pursued my way through the empty streets towards my own house, which I could scarcely recognize—the windows were broken to pieces, no light was visible, the doors were shut, and the bustle of domestics had ceased. My companion burst into a loud laugh. "Yes, yes," said he, "you see the state of things: however, you will find your friend Bendel at home; he was sent back the other day so fatigued, that I assure you he has never left the house since. He will have a fine story to tell! So I wish you a very good night—may we shortly meet again!"

I had repeatedly rung the bell; at last a light appeared; and Bendel inquired from within who was there. The poor fellow could scarcely contain himself at the sound of my voice. The door

flew open, and we were locked in each other's arms. I found him sadly changed; he was looking ill and feeble. I, too, was altered; my hair had become quite gray. He conducted me through the desolate apartments to an inner room, which had escaped the general wreck. After partaking of some refreshments, we seated ourselves; and, with fresh lamentations, he began to tell me that the gray, withered old man whom he had met with my shadow had insensibly led him such a zig-zag race, that he had lost all traces of me, and at last sank down exhausted with fatigue; that, unable to find me, he had returned home, when, shortly after, the mob, at Rascal's instigation, assembled violently before the house, broke the windows, and by all sorts of excesses completely satiated their fury. Thus had they treated their benefactor. My servants had fled in all directions. The police had banished me from the town as a suspicious character, and granted me an interval of twenty-four hours to leave the territory. Bendel added many particulars as to the information I had already obtained respecting Rascal's wealth and marriage. This villain, it seems—who was the author of all the measures taken against me—became possessed of my secret nearly from the beginning, and, tempted by the love of money, had supplied himself with a key to my chest, and from that time had been laying the foundation of

his present wealth. Bendel related all this with many tears, and wept for joy that I was once more safely restored to him, after all his fears and anxieties for me. In me, however, such a state of things only awoke despair.

My dreadful fate now stared me in the face in all its gigantic and unchangeable horror. The source of tears was exhausted within me; no groans escaped my breast; but with cool indifference I bared my unprotected head to the blast. "Bendel," said I, "you know my fate; this heavy visitation is a punishment for my early sins: but as for thee, my innocent friend, I can no longer permit thee to share my destiny. I will depart this very night—saddle me a horse—I will set out alone. Remain here, Bendel—I insist upon it: there must be some chests of gold still left in the house—take them, they are thine. I shall be a restless and solitary wanderer on the face of the earth; but should better days arise, and fortune once more smile propitiously on me, then I will not forget thy steady fidelity; for in hours of deep distress thy faithful bosom has been the depository of my sorrows." With a bursting heart, the worthy Bendel prepared to obey this last command of his master; for I was deaf to all his arguments and blind to his tears. My horse was brought—I pressed my weeping friend to my bosom—threw myself into the saddle, and, under the friendly shades of

night, quitted this sepulchre of my existence, indifferent which road my horse should take; for now on this side the grave I had neither wishes, hopes, nor fears.

After a short time I was joined by a traveller on foot, who, after walking for a while by the side of my horse, observed that as we both seemed to be travelling the same road, he should beg my permission to lay his cloak on the horse's back behind me, to which I silently assented. He thanked me with easy politeness for this trifling favor, praised my horse, and then took occasion to extol the happiness and the power of the rich, and fell, I scarcely know how, into a sort of conversation with himself, in which I merely acted the part of listener. He unfolded his views of human life and of the world, and, touching on metaphysics, demanded an answer from that cloudy science to the question of questions—the answer that should solve all mysteries. He deduced one problem from another in a very lucid manner, and then proceeded to their solution.

You may remember, my dear friend, that after having run through the school-philosophy, I became sensible of my unfitness for metaphysical speculations, and therefore totally abstained from engaging in them. Since then I have acquiesced in some things, and abandoned all hope of com-

prehending others; trusting, as you advised me, to my own plain sense and the voice of conscience to direct, and, if possible, maintain me in the right path.

Now this skilful rhetorician seemed to me to expend great skill in rearing a firmly-constructed edifice, towering aloft on its own self-supported basis, but resting on, and upheld by, some internal principle of necessity. I regretted in it the total absence of what I desired to find; and thus it seemed a mere work of art, serving only by its elegance and exquisite finish to captivate the eye. Nevertheless, I listened with pleasure to this eloquently gifted man, who diverted my attention from my own sorrows to the speaker; and he would have secured my entire acquiescence if he had appealed to my heart as well as to my judgment.

In the meantime the hours had passed away, and morning had already dawned imperceptibly in the horizon; looking up, I shuddered as I beheld in the east all those splendid hues that announce the rising sun. At this hour, when all natural shadows are seen in their full proportions, not a fence or shelter of any kind could I descry in this open country, and I was not alone! I cast a glance at my companion, and shuddered again —it was the man in the gray coat himself! He laughed at my surprise, and said, without giving me time to speak: "You see, according to the

fashion of this world, mutual convenience binds us together for a time; there is plenty of time to think of parting. The road here along the mountain, which perhaps has escaped your notice, is the only one that you can prudently take; into the valley you dare not descend—the path over the mountain would but reconduct you to the town which you have left—my road, too, lies this way. I perceive you change color at the rising sun—I have no objections to let you have the loan of your shadow during our journey, and in return you may not be indisposed to tolerate my society. You have now no Bendel; but I will act for him. I regret that you are not over-fond of me; but that need not prevent you from accepting my poor services. The devil is not so black as he is painted. Yesterday you provoked me, I own; but now that is all forgotten, and you must confess I have this day succeeded in beguiling the wearisomeness of your journey. Come, take your shadow, and make trial of it."

The sun had risen, and we were meeting with passengers; so I reluctantly consented. With a smile, he immediately let my shadow glide down to the ground; and I beheld it take its place by that of my horse, and gayly trot along with me. My feelings were anything but pleasant. I rode through groups of country people, who respectfully made way for the well-mounted stranger. Thus I proceeded, occasionally stealing a side-

long glance with a beating heart from my horse at the shadow once my own, but now, alas, accepted as a loan from a stranger, or rather a fiend. He moved on carelessly at my side, whistling a song. He being on foot, and I on horseback, the temptation to hazard a silly project occurred to me; so, suddenly turning my bridle, I set spurs to my horse, and at full gallop struck into a by-path; but my shadow, on the sudden movement of my horse, glided away, and stood on the road quietly awaiting the approach of its legal owner. I was obliged to return abashed towards the gray man; but he very coolly finished his song, and with a laugh set my shadow to rights again, reminding me that it was at my option to have it irrevocably fixed to me, by purchasing it on just and equitable terms. "I hold you," said he, "by the shadow; and you seek in vain to get rid of me. A rich man like you requires a shadow, unquestionably; and you are to blame for not having seen this sooner."

I now continued my journey on the same road; every convenience and even luxury of life was mine; I moved about in peace and freedom, for I possessed a shadow, though a borrowed one; and all the respect due to wealth was paid to me. But a deadly disease preyed on my heart. My extraordinary companion, who gave himself out to be the humble attendant of the richest individual in the world, was remarkable for his dexterity;

in short, his singular address and promptitude admirably fitted him to be the very *beau ideal* of a rich man's lacquey. But he never stirred from my side, and tormented me with constant assurances that a day would most certainly come when, if it were only to get rid of him, I should gladly comply with his terms, and redeem my shadow. Thus he became as irksome as he was hateful to me. I really stood in awe of him—I had placed myself in his power. Since he had effected my return to the pleasures of the world, which I had resolved to shun, he had the perfect mastery of me. His eloquence was irresistible, and at times I almost thought he was in the right. A shadow is indeed necessary to a man of fortune ; and if I chose to maintain the position in which he had placed me, there was only one means of doing so. But on one point I was immovable : since I had sacrificed my love for Minna, and thereby blighted the happiness of my whole life, I would not now, for all the shadows in the universe, be induced to sign away my soul to this being—I knew not how it might end.

One day we were sitting by the entrance of a cavern much visited by strangers who ascended the mountain ; the rushing noise of a subterranean torrent resounded from the fathomless abyss, the depths of which exceeded all calculation. He was, according to his favorite custom, employing all the powers of his lavish fancy, and all the

charm of the most brilliant coloring, to depict to me what I might effect in the world by virtue of my purse, when once I had recovered my shadow. With my elbows resting on my knees, I kept my face concealed in my hands, and listened to the false fiend, my heart torn between the temptation and my determined opposition to it. Such indecision I could no longer endure, and resolved on one decisive effort.

"You seem to forget," said I, "that I tolerate your presence only on certain conditions, and that I am to retain perfect freedom of action."

"You have but to command; I depart," was all his reply.

The threat was familiar to me; I was silent. He then began to fold up my shadow. I turned pale, but allowed him to continue. A long silence ensued, which he was the first to break.

"You cannot endure me, Mr. Schlemihl—you hate me—I am aware of it—but why?—is it, perhaps, because you attacked me on the open plain, in order to rob me of my invisible bird's nest? or is it because you thievishly endeavored to seduce away the shadow with which I had entrusted you—my own property—confiding implicitly in your honor? I, for my part, have no dislike to you. It is perfectly natural that you should avail yourself of every means, presented either by cunning or force, to promote your own interests. That your principles also should be of the strictest

sort, and your intentions of the most honorable description,—these are fancies with which I have nothing to do; I do not pretend to such strictness myself. Each of us is free, I to act, and you to think, as seems best. Did I ever seize you by the throat, to tear out of your body that valuable soul I so ardently wish to possess? Did I ever set my servant to attack you, to get back my purse, or attempt to run off with it from you?"

I had not a word to reply.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, "you detest me, and I know it; but I bear you no malice on that account. We must part—that is clear; also I must say that you begin to be very tiresome to me. Once more let me advise you to free yourself entirely from my troublesome presence by the purchase of your shadow."

I held out the purse to him.

"No, Mr. Schlemihl; not at that price."

With a deep sigh, I said, "Be it so, then; let us part, I entreat; cross my path no more. There is surely room enough in the world for us both."

Laughing, he replied: "I go; but just allow me to inform you how you may at any time recall me whenever you have a mind to see your most humble servant: you have only to shake your purse, the sound of the gold will bring me to you in an instant. In this world every one consults his own advantage; but you see I have thought of yours, and clearly confer upon you a new power. Oh

this purse! it would still prove a powerful bond between us, had the moth begun to devour your shadow. But enough: you hold me by my gold, and may command your servant at any distance. You know that I can be very serviceable to my friends, and that the rich are my peculiar care—this you have observed. As to your shadow, allow me to say, you can only redeem it on one condition."

Recollections of former days came over me; and I hastily asked him if he had obtained Mr. Thomas John's signature.

He smiled, and said: "It was by no means necessary from so excellent a friend."

"Where is he? for God's sake tell me; I insist upon knowing."

With some hesitation, he put his hand into his pocket, and drew out the altered and pallid form of Mr. John by the hair of his head, whose livid lips uttered the awful words, "*Justo judicio Dei judicatus sum; justo judicio Dei condemnatus sum*" —"I am judged and condemned by the just judgment of God." I was horror-struck; and instantly throwing the jingling purse into the abyss, I exclaimed, "Wretch! in the name of Heaven, I conjure you to be gone!—away from my sight! —never appear before me again!" With a dark expression on his countenance, he rose, and immediately vanished behind the huge rocks which surrounded the place.

CHAPTER V.

I was now left equally without gold and without shadow; but a heavy load was taken from my breast, and I felt cheerful. Had not my Minna been irrecoverably lost to me, or even had I been perfectly free from self-reproach on her account, I felt that happiness might yet have been mine. At present I was lost in doubt as to my future course. I examined my pockets, and found I had a few gold-pieces still left, which I counted with feelings of great satisfaction. I had left my horse at the inn, and was ashamed to return, or at all events I must wait till the sun had set, which at present was high in the heavens. I laid myself down under a shady tree and fell into a peaceful sleep.

Lovely forms floated in airy measures before me, and filled up my delightful dreams. Minna, with a garland of flowers entwined in her hair, was bending over me with a smile of good-will; also the worthy Bendel was crowned with flowers, and hastened to meet me with friendly greetings. Many other forms seemed to rise up confusedly in the distance: thyself among the number, Chamisso. Perfect radiance beamed around them, but none had a shadow; and what was more surprising, there was no appearance of unhappiness on this account. Nothing was to be seen or heard but flowers and music; and love

and joy, and groves of never-fading palms, seemed the natives of that happy clime.

In vain I tried to detain and comprehend the lovely but fleeting forms. I was conscious, also, of being in a dream, and was anxious that nothing should rouse me from it; and when I did awake, I kept my eyes closed, in order if possible to continue the illusion. At last I opened my eyes. The sun was now visible in the east; I must have slept the whole night: I looked upon this as a warning not to return to the inn. What I had left there I was content to lose, without much regret; and resigning myself to Providence, I decided on taking a by-road that led through the wooded declivity of the mountain. I never once cast a glance behind me; nor did it ever occur to me to return, as I might have done, to Bendel, whom I had left in affluence. I reflected on the new character I was now going to assume in the world. My present garb was very humble —consisting of an old black coat I formerly had worn at Berlin, and which by some chance was the first I put my hand on before setting out on this journey, a travelling-cap, and an old pair of boots. I cut down a knotted stick in memory of the spot, and commenced my pilgrimage.

In the forest I met an aged peasant, who gave me a friendly greeting, and with whom I entered into conversation, requesting, as a traveller desirous of information, some particulars relative

to the road, the country, and its inhabitants, the productions of the mountain, etc. He replied to my various inquiries with readiness and intelligence. At last we reached the bed of a mountain-torrent, which had laid waste a considerable tract of the forest; I inwardly shuddered at the idea of the open sunshine. I suffered the peasant to go before me. In the middle of the very place which I dreaded so much, he suddenly stopped, and turned back to give me an account of this inundation; but instantly perceiving that I had no shadow, he broke off abruptly, and exclaimed: "How is this?—you have no shadow!"

"Alas, alas!" said I, "in a long and serious illness I had the misfortune to lose my hair, my nails, and my shadow. Look, good father; although my hair has grown again, it is quite white; and at my age my nails are still very short; and my poor shadow seems to have left me, never to return."

"Ah!" said the old man, shaking his head; "no shadow! that was indeed a terrible illness, sir."

But he did not resume his narrative; and at the very first cross-road we came to left me without uttering a syllable. Fresh tears flowed from my eyes, and my cheerfulness had fled. With a heavy heart I travelled on, avoiding all society. I plunged into the deepest shades of the forest; and often, to avoid a sunny tract of country, I

waited for hours till every human being had left it, and I could pass it unobserved. In the evenings I took shelter in the villages. I bent my steps to a mine in the mountains, where I hoped to meet with work underground; for besides that my present situation compelled me to provide for my own support, I felt that incessant and laborious occupation alone could divert my mind from dwelling on painful subjects. A few rainy days assisted me materially on my journey; but it was to the no small detriment of my boots, the soles of which were better suited to Count Peter than to the poor foot-traveller. I was soon barefoot, and a new purchase must be made. The following morning I commenced an earnest search in a market-place, where a fair was being held; and I saw in one of the booths new and second-hand boots set out for sale. I was a long time selecting and bargaining; I wished much to have a new pair, but was frightened at the extravagant price; and so was obliged to content myself with a second-hand pair, still pretty good and strong, which the beautiful fair-haired youth who kept the booth handed over to me with a cheerful smile, wishing me a prosperous journey. I went on, and left the place immediately by the northern gate.

I was so lost in my own thoughts, that I walked along scarcely knowing how or where. I was calculating the chances of my reaching the

mine by the evening, and considering how I should introduce myself. I had not gone two hundred steps, when I perceived I was not in the right road. I looked round, and found myself in a wild-looking forest of ancient firs, where apparently the stroke of the axe had never been heard. A few steps more brought me amid huge rocks covered with moss and saxifragous plants, between which whole fields of snow and ice were extended. The air was intensely cold. I looked round, and the forest had disappeared behind me; a few steps more, and there was the stillness of death itself. The icy plain on which I stood stretched to an immeasurable distance, and a thick cloud rested upon it; the sun was of a red blood-color at the verge of the horizon; the cold was insupportable. I could not imagine what had happened to me. The benumbing frost made me quicken my pace. I heard a distant sound of waters; and at one step more I stood on the icy shore of some ocean. Innumerable droves of sea-dogs rushed past me and plunged into the waves. I continued my way along this coast, and again met with rocks, plains, birch and fir forests, and yet only a few minutes had elapsed. It was now intensely hot. I looked around, and suddenly found myself between some fertile rice-fields and mulberry trees; I sat down under their shade, and found by my watch that it was just one quarter of an hour

since I had left the village market. I fancied it was a dream; but no, I was indeed awake, as I felt by the experiment I made of biting my tongue. I closed my eyes in order to collect my scattered thoughts. Presently I heard unintelligible words uttered in a nasal tone; and I beheld two Chinese, whose Asiatic physiognomies were not to be mistaken, even had their costume not betrayed their origin. They were addressing me in the language and with the salutations of their country. I rose and drew back a couple of steps. They had disappeared; the landscape was entirely changed; the rice-fields had given place to trees and woods. I examined some of the trees and plants around me, and ascertained such of them as I was acquainted with to be productions of the southern part of Asia. I made one step towards a particular tree, and again all was changed. I now moved on like a recruit at drill, taking slow and measured steps, gazing with astonished eyes at the wonderful variety of regions, plains, meadows, mountains, steppes, and sandy deserts, which passed in succession before me. I had now no doubt that I had seven-leagued boots on my feet.

I fell on my knees in silent gratitude, shedding tears of thankfulness; for I now saw clearly what was to be my future condition. Shut out by early sins from all human society, I was offered amends for the privation by Nature herself, which

I had ever loved. The earth was granted me as a rich garden; and the knowledge of her operations was to be the study and object of my life. This was not a mere resolution. I have since endeavored, with anxious and unabated industry, faithfully to imitate the finished and brilliant model then presented to me; and my vanity has received a check when led to compare the picture with the original. I rose immediately, and took a hasty survey of this new field, where I hoped afterwards to reap a rich harvest.

I stood on the heights of Thibet; and the sun I had lately beheld in the east was now sinking in the west. I traversed Asia from east to west, and thence passed into Africa, which I curiously examined, at repeated visits, in all directions. As I gazed on the ancient pyramids and temples of Egypt, I descried, in the sandy deserts near Thebes of the hundred gates, the caves where Christian hermits dwelt of old.

My determination was instantly taken, that here should be my future dwelling. I chose one of the most secluded, but roomy, comfortable, and inaccessible to the jackals.

I stepped over from the pillars of Hercules to Europe; and having taken a survey of its northern and southern countries, I passed by the north of Asia, on the polar glaciers, to Greenland and America, visiting both parts of this continent; and the winter, which was already at its height

in the south, drove me quickly back from Cape Horn to the north. I waited till daylight had risen in the east of Asia, and then, after a short rest, continued my pilgrimage. I followed in both the Americas the vast chain of the Andes, once considered the loftiest on our globe. I stepped carefully and slowly from one summit to another, sometimes over snowy heights, sometimes over flaming volcanoes, often breathless from fatigue. At last I reached Elias's mountain, and sprang over Behring's Straits into Asia; I followed the western coast in its various windings, carefully observing which of the neighboring isles was accessible to me. From the peninsula of Malacca my boots carried me to Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Lombok. I made many attempts —often with danger, and always unsuccessfully —to force my way over the numerous little islands and rocks with which this sea is studded, wishing to find a northwest passage to Borneo and other islands of the Archipelago.

At last I sat down at the extreme point of Lombok, my eyes turned towards the southeast, lamenting that I had so soon reached the limits allotted to me, and bewailing my fate as a captive in his grated cell. Thus was I shut out from that remarkable country, New Holland, and the islands of the southern ocean, so essentially necessary to a knowledge of the earth, and which would have best assisted me in the study of the

animal and vegetable kingdoms. And thus, at the very outset, I beheld all my labors condemned to be limited to mere fragments.

Ah! Chamisso, what is the activity of man?

Frequently in the most rigorous winters of the southern hemisphere I have rashly thrown myself on a fragment of drifting ice between Cape Horn and Van Diemen's Land, in the hope of effecting a passage to New Holland, reckless of the cold and the vast ocean, reckless of my fate, even should this savage land prove my grave.

But all in vain—I never reached New Holland. Each time, when defeated in my attempt, I returned to Lombok; and seated at its extreme point, my eyes directed to the southeast, I gave way afresh to lamentations that my range of investigation was so limited. At last I tore myself from the spot, and, heartily grieved at my disappointment, returned to the interior of Asia. Setting out at morning dawn, I traversed it from east to west, and at night reached the cave in Thebes which I had previously selected for my dwelling-place, and had visited yesterday afternoon.

After a short repose, as soon as daylight had visited Europe, it was my first care to provide myself with the articles of which I stood most in need. First of all a drag to act on my boots; for I had experienced the inconvenience of these whenever I wished to shorten my steps and ex-

amine surrounding objects more fully. A pair of slippers to go over the boots served the purpose effectually; and from that time I carried two pairs about me, because I frequently cast them off from my feet in my botanical investigations, without having time to pick them up, when threatened by the approach of lions, men, or hyenas. My excellent watch, owing to the short duration of my movements, was also on these occasions an admirable chronometer. I wanted, besides, a sextant, a few philosophical instruments, and some books. To purchase these things, I made several unwilling journeys to London and Paris, choosing a time when I could be hid by the favoring clouds. As all my ill-gotten gold was exhausted, I carried over from Africa some ivory, which is there so plentiful, in payment of my purchases—taking care, however; to pick out the smallest teeth, in order not to overburden myself. I had thus soon provided myself with all that I wanted, and now entered on a new mode of life as a student—wandering over the globe—measuring the height of the mountains, and the temperature of the air and of the springs —observing the manners and habits of animals —investigating plants and flowers. From the equator to the pole, and from the new world to the old, I was constantly engaged in repeating and comparing my experiments.

My usual food consisted of the eggs of the

African ostrich or northern sea-birds, with a few fruits, especially those of the palm and the banana of the tropics. The tobacco-plant consoled me when I was depressed; and the affection of my spaniel was a compensation for the loss of human sympathy and society. When I returned from my excursions, loaded with fresh treasures, to my cave in Thebes, which he guarded during my absence, he ever sprang joyfully forward to greet me, and made me feel that I was indeed not alone on the earth. An adventure soon occurred which brought me once more among my fellow-creatures.

One day, as I was gathering lichens and algæ on the northern coast, with the drag on my boots, a bear suddenly made his appearance, and was stealing towards me round the corner of a rock. After throwing away my slippers, I attempted to step across to an island, by means of a rock, projecting from the waves in the intermediate space, that served as a stepping-stone. I reached the rock safely with one foot, but instantly fell into the sea with the other, one of my slippers having inadvertently remained on. The cold was intense; and I escaped this imminent peril at the risk of my life. On coming ashore, I hastened to the Libyan sands to dry myself in the sun; but the heat affected my head so much, that, in a fit of illness, I staggered back to the north. In vain I sought relief by change of place—hurry-

ing from east to west, and from west to east—now in climes of the south, now in those of the north; sometimes I rushed into daylight, sometimes into the shades of night. I know not how long this lasted. A burning fever raged in my veins; with extreme anguish I felt my senses leaving me. Suddenly, by an unlucky accident, I trod upon some one's foot, whom I had hurt, and received a blow in return which laid me senseless.

On recovering, I found myself lying comfortably in a good bed, which, with many other beds, stood in a spacious and handsome apartment. Some one was watching by me; people seemed to be walking from one bed to another; they came beside me, and spoke of me as *Number Twelve.* On the wall, at the foot of my bed—it was no dream, for I distinctly read it—on a black-marble tablet was inscribed my name, in large letters of gold:

PETER SCHLEMIHL.

Underneath were two rows of letters in smaller characters, which I was too feeble to connect together, and closed my eyes again.

I now heard something read aloud, in which I distinctly noted the words, "Peter Schlemihl," but could not collect the full meaning. I saw a man of benevolent aspect, and a very beautiful female dressed in black, standing near my bed;

their countenances were not unknown to me, but in my weak state I could not remember who they were. Some time elapsed, and I began to regain my strength. I was called *Number Twelve*, and, from my long beard, was supposed to be a Jew, but was not the less carefully nursed on that account. No one seemed to perceive that I was destitute of a shadow. My boots, I was assured, together with everything found on me when I was brought here, were in safe keeping, and would be given up to me on my restoration to health. This place was called the SCHLEMIHLIUM: the daily recitation I had heard was an exhortation to pray for Peter Schlemihl as the founder and benefactor of this institution. The benevolent-looking man whom I had seen by my bedside was Bendel; the beautiful lady in black was Minna.

I had been enjoying the advantages of the Schlemihlium without being recognized; and I learned, further, that I was in Bendel's native town, where he had employed a part of my once unhallowed gold in founding an hospital in my name, under his superintendence, and that its unfortunate inmates daily pronounced blessings on me. Minna had become a widow: an unhappy lawsuit had deprived Rascal of his life, and Minna of the greater part of her property. Her parents were no more; and here she dwelt in widowed piety, wholly devoting herself to works of mercy.

One day, as she stood by the side of Number Twelve's bed with Bendel, he said to her, "Noble lady, why expose yourself so frequently to this unhealthy atmosphere? Has fate dealt so harshly with you as to render you desirous of death?"

"By no means, Mr. Bendel," she replied; "since I have awoke from my long dream, all has gone well with me. I now neither wish for death nor fear it, and think on the future and on the past with equal serenity. Do you not also feel an inward satisfaction in thus paying a pious tribute of gratitude and love to your old master and friend?"

"Thanks be to God, I do, noble lady," said he. "Ah, how wonderfully has everything fallen out! How thoughtlessly have we sipped joys and sorrows from the full cup now drained to the last drop; and we might fancy the past a mere prelude to the real scene for which we now wait armed by experience. How different has been the reality! Yet let us not regret the past, but rather rejoice that we have not lived in vain. As respects our old friend also, I have a firm hope that it is now better with him than formerly."

"I trust so, too," answered Minna; and so saying, she passed by me, and they departed.

This conversation made a deep impression on me; and I hesitated whether I should discover myself or depart unknown. At last I decided; and, asking for pen and paper, wrote as follows:

"Matters are indeed better with your old friend than formerly. He has repented; and his repentance has led to forgiveness."

I now attempted to rise, for I felt myself stronger. The keys of a little chest near my bed were given me; and in it I found all my effects. I put on my clothes; fastened my botanical case round me—wherein, with delight, I found my northern lichens all safe—put on my boots, and, leaving my note on the table, left the gates, and was speedily far advanced on the road to Thebes.

Passing along the Syrian coast, which was the same road I had taken on last leaving home, I beheld my poor Figaro running to meet me. The faithful animal, after vainly waiting at home for his master's return, had probably followed his traces. I stood still, and called him. He sprang towards me with leaps and barks, and a thousand demonstrations of unaffected delight. I took him in my arms—for he was unable to follow me—and carried him home.

There I found everything exactly in the order in which I had left it; and returned by degrees, as my increasing strength allowed me, to my old occupations and usual mode of life, from which I was kept back a whole year by my fall into the Polar Ocean. And this, dear Chamisso, is the life I am still leading. My boots are not yet worn out, as I had been led to fear would be the case from that very learned work of Tieckius—

De Rebus Gestis Pollicilli. Their energies remain unimpaired; and although mine are gradually failing me, I enjoy the consolation of having spent them in pursuing incessantly one object, and that not fruitlessly.

So far as my boots would carry me, I have observed and studied our globe and its conformation, its mountains and temperature, the atmosphere in its various changes, the influences of the magnetic power; in fact, I have studied all living creation—and more especially the kingdom of plants—more profoundly than any one of our race. I have arranged all the facts in proper order, to the best of my ability, in different works. The consequences deducible from these facts, and my views respecting them, I have hastily recorded in some essays and dissertations. I have settled the geography of the interior of Africa and the Arctic regions, of the interior of Asia and of its eastern coast. My *Historia Stirpium Plantarum Utriusque Orbis* is an extensive fragment of a *Flora universalis terræ* and a part of my *Systema Naturæ.* Besides increasing the number of our known species by more than a third, I have also contributed somewhat to the natural system of plants and to a knowledge of their geography. I am now deeply engaged on my *Fauna*, and shall take care to have my manuscripts sent to the University of Berlin before my decease.

I have selected thee, my dear Chamisso, to be the guardian of my wonderful history, thinking that, when I have left this world, it may afford valuable instruction to the living. As for thee, Chamisso, if thou wouldst live amongst thy fellow-creatures, learn to value thy shadow more than gold; if thou wouldst only live to thyself and thy nobler part—in this thou needest no counsel.

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